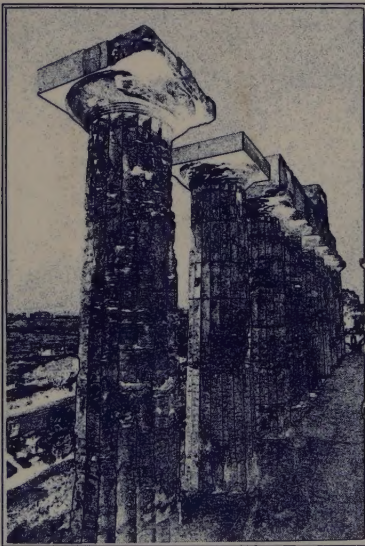


VOLUME ONE

THE HUMANITIES IN THE WESTERN TRADITION

A READER



EDITED BY

MICHAEL GRAHAM | MICHAEL LEVIN | CONSTANCE BOUCHARD

VOLUME ONE

CONTENTS

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A R E A D E R

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MICHAEL GRAHAM | MICHAEL LEVIN | CONSTANCE BOUCHARD

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CONTENTS

Prologue: Primary Sources and How We Read Them 1

- 1 The Iliad 21
Homer
- 2 Phaedo 65
Plato
- 3 The Art of Love 89
Ovid
- 4 Bible, Genesis 1–9 127
- 5 Bible, Exodus 12–24 141
- 6 Bible, Job 1–7, 40–42 159
- 7 Bible, Isaiah, 1–12 169
- 8 Bible, All of Matthew's Gospel 185
- 9 Bible, Gospel of John, chapters 1–6 227
- 10 Bible, Romans 3–13 239

- 11 *Confessions* 251
 Augustine
- 12 *The Koran* 273
- 13 *Sources of the Western Tradition, Volume 1* 311
 Benedictine Rule
 Perry, Peden, Von Laue, eds.
- 14 *Sources of the Western Tradition, Volume 1* 313
 Selections from Thomas Aquinas
 Perry, Peden, Von Laue, eds.
- 15 *Four Twelfth-Century Epics* 323
 "Conquest of Orange"
 Guillaume d'Orange
- 16 *The Portable Dante* 369
 First six cantos of "Divine Comedy"
 Mark Musa, ed.
- 17 *The Civilization of the Italian Renaissance* 397
 Petrarch, "Letter to Posterity"
 Kathheth R. Bartlett, ed.
- 18 *Sources of the Western Tradition, Volume 1* 405
 Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man"
 Perry, Peden, Von Laue, eds.

Prologue

PRIMARY SOURCES AND HOW WE READ THEM

What Is History?

Many students believe that the study of history involves simply memorizing dates, names, battles, treaties, and endless numbers of similar, usually uninteresting facts with seemingly no relevance to their lives and concerns. After all, so they think, the past is over and done with. Historians know what has happened, and all that is left for students is to absorb this body of knowledge, for reasons known only to educators.

But these notions are wrong—totally wrong. History involves discovery and interpretation, and its content is vitally relevant to our lives. Our understanding of history is constantly changing and deepening, as historians learn more about the past and shed new light on its meaning. Just as significant, each person who studies the past brings to it a unique perspective and raises questions that are meaningful to him or her. Although there is certainly an objective past, which we all should endeavor to discover and understand as fully as possible, each of us also must explore a past that has personal meaning in order to find in it insights and truths relevant to our own concerns. The drive to understand what has gone before us is innately human and springs from our need to know who we are. History serves this function of self-discovery in a special way because of its universality. Contrary to the opinion of many people, the study of history does not focus exclusively or even primarily on politics. It deals with all aspects of past human activity and belief, for there is no subject or concern that lacks a history. Therefore, each of us can and should explore the origins and historical evolution of whatever is most important to us.

Regardless of our individual interest or questions, the study and interpretation of our historical heritage involves coming to grips with the dynamics of the historical process. It means exploring the ways in which human societies reacted to the environments in which they found themselves and the ways in which they sought to reshape those environments to meet their needs. It means exploring the complex interplay of geography, technology, religion, social structures, and a myriad of other historical factors. It means exploring the ways in which societies change in response to stimuli and the ways in which they resist change, as well. It means exploring the traditions that have imprinted themselves upon various cultures and the ways those traditions have provided continuity over long periods of time. It means exploring the roles of individuals in shaping the course of history and the ways in which individuals have been shaped by historical circumstances. Indeed, the questions we ask of the past are limited only by our imaginations; the answers we arrive at are limited only by the evidence at hand and our

ability to use that evidence thoroughly and creatively. Our answers, no matter how partial or tentative, certainly reveal the inner dynamics of whatever historical culture we are investigating. More than that, those insights help us better understand the challenges we face in our own day by enlarging our field of vision. When applied to the global community, historical perspective enables us to appreciate the richness of human experience and expression and the factors underlying the striking similarities and differences that exist among the world's peoples.

This collection of sources will help you discover some of the major lines of global historical development and understand many of the major cultural traditions and forces that have shaped history around the world. As editors we will not hand you answers; you will have to work for them because hard work lies at the heart of historical study. The word *history*, which is Greek in origin, means "learning through inquiry," and that is precisely what historians do. They discover and interpret the past by asking questions and conducting research. Their inquiry revolves around an examination of evidence left by the past. For lack of a better term, historians call that evidence *primary source material*.

Primary Sources: Their Value and Limitations

Primary sources are records that for the most part have been passed on in written form, thereby preserving memories of past events. These written sources include, but are not limited to, official records, law codes, private correspondence, literature, religious texts, merchants' account books, memoirs, and the list goes on and on. No source by itself contains unadulterated truth or the whole picture. Each gives us only a glimpse of reality, and it is the historian's task to fit these fragments of the past into a coherent picture.

Imagine for a moment that some historian in the mid twenty-first century decides to write a history of your college class. Think about the primary sources this researcher would seek out: the school catalogue, the registrar's class lists, academic transcripts, and similar official documents; class lecture notes, course syllabi, examinations, term papers, and possibly even textbooks; diaries and private letters; school newspapers, yearbooks, and sports programs; handbills, posters, and even photographs of graffiti; and recollections written down or otherwise recorded by some of your classmates long after they graduated. With a bit of thought you could add other items to the list, among them some nonwritten sources, such as recordings of popular music and photographs and videotapes of student life and activity. But let us confine ourselves for the moment to written records. What do all these documentary sources have in common?

Even this imposing list of sources does not and cannot present the past in its entirety. Where do we see the evidence that never made it into any official record, including long telephone calls home, all-night study groups, afternoons spent at the student union, or complaints shared among classmates about professors and courses? Someone possibly recorded memories of some of these events and opinions, but how complete and trustworthy is that evidence? Also consider that all the documents available to this twenty-first-century historian will be fortunate survivors. They will represent only a small percentage of the vast bulk of written material generated during your college career. Thanks to the wastebasket, the "delete" key, the disintegration of materials, and the inevitable loss of life's memorabilia as years slip by, the evidence available to the future historian will be fragmentary. This is always the case with historical evidence. We cannot preserve the records of the past in their totality. Clearly, the more remote the past, the more fragmentary our documentary evidence. Imagine the feeble chance any particu-

lar document from the twelfth century had of surviving the wars, worms, and wastebaskets of the past eight hundred years.

Now let us consider the many individual pieces of documentary evidence relating to your class's history that have survived. As we review the list, we see that no single primary source gives us a pure, unvarnished, and complete picture. Each has its perspective, value, and limitations. Imagine that the personal essays submitted by applicants for admission were your only sources of information about the student body. Given this, would you not conclude that the school attracted only the most gifted and interesting people imaginable? Also consider that these essays by aspiring students are not the only potential sources available to you that are, at least in part, exercises in creative advertising. You certainly are aware of how every college catalogue presents an idealized picture of campus life.

Despite their flaws, however, essays composed by applicants for admission and the school's official catalogue are still important pieces of historical evidence—when used judiciously. The essays certainly reflect the would-be students' perceptions of the school's cultural values and the types of people it hopes to attract, and usually the applicants are right on the mark because they have read the school's catalogue. That catalogue, of course, reflects the values of the faculty and administrators who composed it. It also provides quite a bit of useful information concerning rules and regulations, courses, instructors, school organizations, and similar items. That factual information, however, is the raw material of history, not history itself, and certainly it does not reflect the full historical reality of your class.

What is true of the catalogue is equally true of the student newspaper and every other piece of evidence generated by or pertinent to your class. Each primary source is part of a larger whole, but as we have already seen, we do not have all the pieces. Think of historical evidence in terms of a jigsaw puzzle. Even though many of the pieces are missing, it is possible to put most, though probably not all, of the remaining pieces together in a reasonable fashion to form a fairly accurate and coherent picture. The picture that emerges might not be complete (it never is), but it is useful and valid. The keys to fitting these pieces together are hard work and imagination. Each is absolutely necessary.

Examining the Sources

Hard work speaks for itself, but students are often unaware that a historian also needs an imagination to reconstruct the past. After all, many students ask, doesn't history consist of strictly defined and irrefutable dates, names, and facts? Where does imagination enter into the process of learning these facts?

Again let us consider your class's history and its documentary sources. Many of those documents provide factual data—dates, names, grades, statistics. And while these data are important, individually and collectively they have no historical meaning until they have been interpreted. Your college class is not a collection of statistics and facts. It is a group of individuals who, despite their differences, share and help mold a collective experience. It is a community evolving within a particular time and place. Influenced by its environment, it is in turn an influence on that world. Any valid or useful history must reach beyond a mere list of dates, names, and facts and interpret the historical characteristics and role of your class: What were its values? How did it change and why? What impact did it have? There are some of the important questions a historian asks of the evidence. The answers the historian arrives at help us gain insight into ourselves, our society, and our human nature.

In order to arrive at answers, the historian must examine each and every piece of relevant evidence in its full context and wring from that evidence as many *inferences* as possible. Facts are the foundation stones of history, but inferences are its edifices. An inference is a logical conclusion drawn from evidence, and it is the heart and soul of historical inquiry.

Every American schoolchild learns that “In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” That fact is worthless, however, unless the individual understands the motives, causes, and significance of this late-fifteenth-century voyage. Certainly a historian must know when Columbus sailed west. After all, time is history’s framework. Yet the questions historians ask go far beyond simple chronology: Why did Columbus sail west? What factors made possible Spain’s engagement in such enterprises at this time? Why were Europeans willing and able to exploit, as they did, the so-called New World? What were the short- and long-term consequences of the European presence in the Americas? These are some of the significant questions to which historians seek inferential answers, and those answers can only be found in the evidence.

One noted historian, Robin Winks, has written a book entitled *The Historian as Detective*, and the image is appropriate although inexact. Like the detective, the historian examines clues in order to reconstruct events. However the detective is essentially interested in discovering what happened, who did it, and why, whereas the historian goes one step beyond and asks what it all means. In addressing the question of meaning, the historian transforms simple curiosity about past events into a humanistic discipline.

As a humanist, the historian seeks wisdom and insight into the human condition, but that wisdom cannot be based on theories spun out of fantasy, wishful thinking, or preconceived notions. Like a detective interrogating witnesses, the historian must also carefully examine the testimony of sources, and both investigators must ask similar questions. First and foremost the historian must evaluate the *validity* of the source. Is it what it purports to be? Artful forgeries have misled many historians. Even if the source is authentic (and most are), it still can mislead the historian. The possibility always exists that the sources’ author lied or otherwise deliberately misrepresented reality. Even if this is not the case, the historian can easily be led astray by not fully understanding the *perspective* reflected in the document. As any detective who has examined a number of eyewitnesses to an event knows, what each individual reports he or she saw often differs radically due to a number of factors. The police detective has the opportunity to re-examine witnesses and offer them the opportunity to change their testimony in the light of new evidence and deeper reflection. The historical researcher is usually not so fortunate. Even when the historian compares a piece of documentary evidence with other evidence in order to uncover its flaws, there is no way to cross-examine it in detail. What is written is written. Given this fact, it is absolutely necessary for the historian to understand as fully as possible the source’s perspective. Thus the historian must ask several key questions: *What* kind of document is this? *Who* wrote it? For *whom* and *why*? *Where* was it composed and *when*?

The *what* is important because understanding the nature of a particular source can save the historian a great deal of frustration. Many historical sources simply do not address the questions a historian would like to ask of them. That twenty-first-century historian would be foolish to try to learn much about the academic quality of your school’s courses from a study of the registrar’s class lists and grade sheets. Student and faculty class notes, copies of old syllabi, examinations, papers, and textbooks would be far more fruitful sources.

Who, *for whom*, and *why* are equally important questions. The official school catalogue undoubtedly addresses some issues pertaining to student social life. But should this document—

designed to attract potential students and place the school in the best possible light—be read and accepted uncritically? Obviously not. It must be tested against student testimony and discovered in such sources as private letters, memoirs, posters, student newspapers, and yearbooks.

Where and *when* are also important questions to ask of any primary source. As a general rule, distance in space and time from an event colors perceptions and can adversely affect the validity of a source's testimony. The recollections of a person celebrating a twenty-fifth class reunion could be quite insightful and valuable. Conceivably this graduate now has a perspective and information that were absent one-quarter century earlier. Just a conceivably, that person's memory might be playing tricks. A source can be so close to or distant from the event it documents that its view is distorted or totally erroneous. Even so the source is not necessarily worthless. Often the blind spots and misinformation within a source reveal to the researcher important insights into the author's attitudes and sources of information.

The historical detective's task is difficult. In addition to constantly questioning the validity and particular perspectives of available sources, the historical researcher must often use whatever evidence is available in imaginative ways. The researcher must interpret these fragmentary and flawed glimpses of the past and piece together the resultant inferences and insights as well as possible. While recognizing that a complete picture of the past is impossible, the historian assumes the responsibility of recreating a past that is valid and has meaning for the present.

You and the Sources

This book will actively involve you in the work of historical inquiry by asking you to draw inferences based on your careful analysis of primary source evidence. This is not an easy task, especially at first, but it is well within your capability. Moreover, along with your professor, we will be helping you all along the way.

You realize by now that historians do not base their conclusions on analyses of single, isolated sources. Historical research consists of laborious sifting through mountains of documents. We have already done much of this work for you by selecting, paring down, and annotating important sources that individually allow you to gain some significant insights into a particular issue or moment in the long and complex history of our global community. In doing this for you, we do not relieve you of the responsibility of recognizing that no single source, no matter how rich it might appear, offers a complete picture of the individual or culture that produced it. Each source that appears in this book is a piece of valuable evidence, but it is only partial evidence. You should never forget this.

You will analyze two types of evidence: documents and artifacts. Each source will be authentic, so you do not have to worry about validating it. We will also supply you with the information necessary to place each piece of evidence into its proper context and will suggest questions you legitimately can and should ask of each source. If you carefully read the introductions and notes, the suggested Questions for Analysis, and, most important of all, the sources themselves—and think about what you are doing—solid inferences will follow.

To illustrate how you should go about this task and what is expected of you, we will take you through a sample exercise, step by step. The exercise consists of our analyzing two sources: a document from the pen of Christopher Columbus and a reproduction of an early sixteenth-century woodcut. By the end of this exercise, if you have worked closely with us, you should be ready to begin interpreting sources on your own.

Before we begin we want to offer a cautionary note. Please understand that we will wring from this sample document many more inferences that we or your professor should expect from you. After all, we bring to this task quite a bit of background that you do not yet have. We have read books on Christopher Columbus that you might never have the opportunity to view, and that reading inevitably has had an influence on how we interpret this particular document. Nevertheless, we believe that leading you through this exercise has value, insofar as it will demonstrate the general way to go about drawing historical inferences and the rich possibilities for insight that lie within a piece of documentary evidence. So please do not be intimidated by what follows. Take from it whatever of value you find in it.

That noted, let us now look at the document. We present it just as it would appear in any chapter of this book: first an introduction, then suggested Questions for Analysis, and finally the source itself, with explanatory footnotes. Because we want to give you a full introduction to the art of documentary source analysis, the excerpt in our example is a bit longer than the average document in this book. The notes that comment on the text are probably also fuller than necessary, but we prefer to err on the side of providing too much information and help, rather than too little. Again do not let the length of the document or its many notes intimidate you. Once you get into the source, you should find it fairly easy going.

Your first step in analyzing any source in this book is to read the introduction and the Questions for Analysis. The former is intended to place the source into context; the latter should provide direction when it comes time to analyze the source. One important point to keep in mind is that every historian approaches a source with at least one question in mind, even though it might be vaguely formulated. Very much like the detective, the historian wants to discover some particular truth or shed light on a given issue. This requires asking specific questions of the witnesses or, in the historian's case, of the evidence. These questions of course should not be prejudgments. One of the worst errors a historian can make is setting out to prove a point or to defend an ideological position. Questions are simply starting points, nothing else, but they are essential. Therefore, as you approach a source, have your question or questions fixed in your mind, and as work your way through a source, constantly remind yourself what issue or issues you are investigating. We have provided you with a number of suggested questions for each source. Perhaps you or your professor will want to ask other questions. Whatever the case, keep focused on these questions and issues, and take notes as you read each source. Never rely on unaided memory; it will almost inevitably lead you astray.

Needless to say, you must be honest and thorough as you study a source. Read each explanatory footnote carefully, lest you misunderstand a word or allusion. Try to understand exactly what the source is saying and what its author's perspective is. Be careful not to wrench items, words, or ideas out of context, thereby distorting them. Above all, read the entire source so that you understand as fully as possible what it says and, just as important, what it does not say.

This is not as difficult as it sounds. It just takes concentration and a bit of work. To illustrate the point, let us read and analyze Christopher Columbus's letter and in the process try to answer this core question: What evidence is there in this document that allows us to judge Columbus's reliability as an objective reporter? By addressing this issue, we will answer questions 3–6 and 8.

“With the Royal Standard Unfurled”

Christopher Columbus, A LETTER CONCERNING RECENTLY DISCOVERED ISLANDS

Sixteenth-century Spain's emergence as the dominant power in the Americas is forever associated with the name of a single mariner: Christopher Columbus (1451–1506). Sponsored by King Ferdinand V of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile, this Genoese sea captain sailed westward into the Atlantic seeking a new route to the empires of East Asia described by John Mandeville, Marco Polo, and others whose books of travels Columbus had avidly read and digested. On October 12, 1492, his fleet of three ships dropped anchor at a small Bahamian island, which Columbus claimed for Spain, naming it San Salvador. The fleet then sailed to two larger islands, which he named Juana and Española (today known as Cuba and Hispaniola).

After exploring these two islands and establishing on Española the fort of Navidad del Señor, Columbus departed for Spain in January 1493. On his way home, the admiral prepared a preliminary account of his expedition to the “Indies” for Luis de Santángel, a counselor to King Ferdinand and one of Columbus's enthusiastic supporters. In composing the letter, Columbus borrowed heavily from his official ship's log, often lifting passages verbatim. When he landed in Lisbon, Portugal, in early March, Columbus dispatched the letter overland, expecting it to precede him to the Spanish royal court in faraway Barcelona, where Santángel would communicate its contents to the two monarchs. The admiral was not disappointed. His triumphal reception at the court in April was proof that the letter had served its purpose.

As you analyze the document, be aware of several facts. The admiral was returning with only two of his vessels. He had lost his flagship, the *Santa Maria*, when it was wrecked on a reef off present-day Haiti on Christmas Day. Also many of Columbus's facts and figures reflect more his enthusiasm than dispassionate analysis. His estimates of the dimensions of the two main islands he explored grossly exaggerate their sizes, and his optimistic report of the wide availability of such riches as gold, spices, cotton, and mastic was not borne out by subsequent exploration and colonization. Although he obtained items of gold and received plenty of reports of nearby gold mines, the metal was rare in the islands. Moreover, the only indigenous spice proved to be the fiery chili pepper; the wild cotton was excellent but not plentiful; and mastic, an eastern Mediterranean aromatic gum, was not native to the Caribbean.

Questions For Analysis

1. How does Columbus indicate that these lands are worth the careful attention of the Spanish monarchs?
2. What does Columbus's description of the physical attributes of the islands suggest about some of the motives for his voyage?
3. Often the eyes only see what the mind prepares them to see. What evidence is there that Columbus saw what he wanted to see and discovered what he expected to discover? In

- other words, how had his environment prepared Columbus to see and interpret what he encountered in the Caribbean?
4. What evidence suggests that Columbus's letter was a carefully crafted piece of self-promotion by a person determined to prove he had reached the Indies?
 5. Notwithstanding the obvious self-promotion, is there any evidence that Columbus also attempted to present an objective and fairly accurate account of what he had seen and experienced? In other words, to what extent, if at all, can we trust his account?
 6. What do the admiral's admitted actions regarding the natives and the ways in which he describes these people allow us to conclude about his attitudes toward these "Indians" and his plans for them?
 7. What does this letter tell us about the culture of the Tainos on the eve of European expansion into their world? Does Columbus tell us anything about these people that doesn't seem to ring totally true? What do you infer from your answer to that latter question?
 8. How does this letter illustrate the fact that single historical sources read in isolation can mislead the researcher?

Sir, as I know that you will be pleased at the great victory with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how in thirty-three days, I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies¹ with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. And there I found very many islands filled with people² innumerable, and of them all I have taken possession for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me. To the first island which I found, I gave the name *San Salvador*,³ in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who has marvelously bestowed all this; the Indians call it "Guanahani." To the second, I gave the name *Isla de Santa Maria de Concepción*,⁴ to the third, *Fernandina*; to the fourth, *Isabella*; to the fifth, *Isla Juana*,⁵ and so to each one I gave a new name.

When I reached Juana, I followed its coast to the westward, and I found it to be so extensive that I thought that it must be the mainland, the province of Catayo.⁶ And since there were neither towns nor villages on the seashore, but only small hamlets, with the people of which I could not have speech, because they all fled immediately, I went forward on the same course, thinking that I should not fail to find great cities and towns. And, at the end of many leagues,⁷ seeing that there was no change and that the coast was bearing me northwards, which I wished to avoid, since winter was already beginning and I proposed to make from it to the south, and as moreover the wind was carrying me forward, I determined not to wait for a change in the weather and retraced my path as far as a certain harbor known to me. And from that point, I sent two men inland to learn if there were a king or great cities. They traveled three days' journey and found an infinity of small hamlets and people without number, but nothing of importance. For this reason, they returned.

I understood sufficiently from other Indians, whom I had already taken,⁸ that this land was nothing but an island. And therefore I followed its coast eastwards for one hundred and seven leagues to the point where it ended. And from that cape, I saw another island, distant eighteen leagues from the former, to the east, to which I at once gave the name "Española." And I went there and followed its northern coast, as I had in the case of Juana, to the eastward for one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line. This island and all the others are very fertile to a limitless degree, and this island is extremely so. In it there are many harbors on the

coast of the sea, beyond comparison with others which I know in Christendom, and many rivers, good and large, which is marvelous. Its lands are high, and there are in it very many sierras and very lofty mountains, beyond comparison with the island of Teneriffe.⁹ All are most beautiful, of a thousand shapes, and all are accessible and filled with trees of a thousand kinds and tall, and they seem to touch the sky. And I am told that they never lose their foliage, as I can understand, for I saw them as green and as lovely as they are in Spain in May, and some of them were flowering, some bearing fruit, and some in another stage, according to their nature. And the nightingale was singing and other birds of a thousand kinds in the month of November there where I went. There are six or eight kinds of palm, which are a wonder to behold on account of their beautiful variety, but so are the other trees and fruits and plants. In it are marvelous pine groves, and there are very large tracts of cultivable lands, and there is honey, and there are birds of many kinds and fruits in great diversity. In the interior are mines of metals, and the population is without number. Española is a marvel.

The sierras and mountains, the plains and arable lands and pastures, are so lovely and rich for planting and sowing, for breeding cattle of every kind, for building towns and villages. The harbors of the sea here are such as cannot be believed to exist unless they have been seen, and so with the rivers, many and great, and good waters, the majority of which contain gold. In the trees and fruits and plants, there is a great difference from those of Juana. In this island, there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

The people of this island, and of all the other islands which I have found and of which I have information, all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them,¹⁰ although some women cover a single place with the leaf of a plant or with a net of cotton which they make for the purpose. They have no iron or steel or weapons, nor are they fitted to use them, not because they are not well built men and of handsome stature, but because they are very marvelously timorous. They have no other arms than weapons made of canes, cut in seeding time, to the ends of which they fix a small sharpened stick. And they do not dare to make use of these, for many times it has happened that I have sent ashore two or three men to some town to have speech, and countless people have come out to them, and as soon as they have seen my men approaching they have fled, even a father not waiting for his son. And this, not because ill has been done to anyone; on the contrary, at every point where I have been and have been able to have speech, I have given to them of all that I had, such as cloth and many other things, without receiving anything for it; but so they are, incurably timid. It is true that, after they have been reassured and have lost their fear, they are so guileless and so generous with all they possess, that no one would believe it who has not seen it. They never refuse anything which they possess, if it be asked of them; on the contrary, they invite anyone to share it, and display as much love as if they would give their hearts, and whether the thing be of value or whether it be of small price, at once with whatever trifle of whatever kind it may be that is given to them, with that they are content.¹¹ I forbade that they should be given things so worthless as fragments of broken crockery and scraps of broken glass, and ends of straps, although when they were able to get them, they fancied that they possessed the best jewel in the world. So it was found that a sailor for a strap received gold to the weight of two and a half *castellanos*,¹² and others much more for other things which were worth much less. As for new *blancas*,¹³ for them they would give everything which they had, although it might be two or three *castellanos*' weight of gold or an *arroba*¹⁴ or two of spun cotton . . . They took even the pieces of the broken hoops of the wine barrels and, like savages, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it. And I gave a thousand handsome good things, which I had brought, in order that they might conceive affection, and more than that, might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service

of their highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and strive to aid us and to give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us. And they do not know any creed and are not idolaters;¹⁵ only they all believe that power and good are in the heavens, and they are very firmly convinced that I, with these ships and men, came from the heavens, and in this belief they everywhere received me, after they had overcome their fear. And this does not come because they are ignorant; on the contrary, they are of a very acute intelligence and are men who navigate all those seas, so that it is amazing how good an account they give of everything, but it is because they have never seen people clothed or ships of such a kind.

And as soon as I arrived in the Indies, in the first island which I found, I took by force some of them, in order that they might learn and give me information of that which there is in those parts, and so it was that they soon understood us, and we them, either by speech or signs, and they have been very serviceable. I still take them with me, and they are always assured that I come from Heaven, for all the intercourse which they have had with me; and they were the first to announce this wherever I went, and the others went running from house to house and to the neighboring towns, with loud cries of, "Come! Come to see the people from Heaven!" So all, men and women alike, when their minds were set at rest concerning us, came, so that not one, great or small, remained behind, and all brought something to eat and drink, which they gave with extraordinary affection. In all the island, they have very many canoes, like rowing *fustas*,¹⁶ some larger, some smaller, and some are larger than a *fusta* of eighteen benches. They are not so broad, because they are made of a single log of wood, but a *fusta* would not keep up with them in rowing, since their speed is a thing incredible. And in these they navigate among all those islands, which are innumerable, and carry their goods. One of these canoes I have seen with seventy and eighty men in her, and each one with his oar.

In all these islands, I saw no great diversity in the appearance of the people or in their manners and language. On the contrary, they all understand one another,¹⁷ which is a very curious thing, on account of which I hope that their highnesses will determine upon their conversation to our holy faith, towards which they are very inclined.

I have already said how I have gone one hundred and seven leagues in a straight line from west to east along the seashore of the island Juana, and as a result of that voyage, I can say that this island is larger than England and Scotland together, for, beyond these one hundred and seven leagues, there remain to the westward two provinces to which I have not gone. One of these provinces they call "Avan,"¹⁸ and there the people are born with tails;¹⁹ and these provinces cannot have a length of less than fifty or sixty leagues, as I could understand from those Indians whom I have and who know all the islands.

The other, Española, has a circumference greater than all Spain, from Colibre, by the sea-coast, to Fuenterrabia in Vizcaya, since I voyaged along one side one hundred and eighty-eight great leagues in a straight line from west to east. It is a land to be desired and, seen, it is never to be left. And . . . I have taken possession for their highnesses . . . in this Española, in {a} situation most convenient and in the best position for the mines of gold and for all intercourse as well with the mainland . . . belonging to the Grand Khan,²⁰ where will be great trade and gain. I have taken possession of a large town, to which I gave the name *Villa de Navidad*,²¹ and in it I have made fortifications and a fort, which now will by this time be entirely finished, and I have left in it sufficient men for such a purpose with arms and artillery and provisions for more than a year, and a *fusta*, and one, a matter of all seacraft, to build others, and great friendship with the king of that land, so much so, that he was proud to call me, and to treat me as, a brother. And even if he were to change his attitude to one of hostility towards these men, he and his do not know what arms are and they go naked, as I have already said, and are the most timorous people that

there are in the world, so that the men whom I have left there alone would suffice to destroy all that land, and the island is without danger for their persons, if they know how to govern themselves.²²

In all these islands, it seems to me that all men are content with one woman, and to their chief or king they give as many as twenty.²³ It appears to me that the women work more than the men. And I have not been able to learn if they hold private property; what seemed to me to appear was that, in that which one had, all took a share, especially of eatable things.²⁴

In these islands I have so far found no human monstrosities, as many expected,²⁵ but on the contrary the whole population is very well-formed, nor are they negroes as in Guinea,²⁶ but their hair is flowing, and they are not born where there is intense force in the rays of the sun; it is true that the sun has there great power, although it is distant from the equinoctial line twenty-six degrees. In these islands, where there are high mountains, the cold was severe this winter, but they endure it, being used to it and with the help of meats which they eat with many and extremely hot spices. As I have found no monsters, so I have had no report of any, except in an island "Quaris," the second at the coming into the Indies, which is inhabited by a people who are regarded in all the islands as very fierce and who eat human flesh. They have many canoes with which they range through all the islands of India and pillage and take as much as they can.²⁷ They are no more malformed than the others, except that they have the custom of wearing their hair long like women, and they use bows and arrows of the same cane stems, with a small piece of wood at the end, owing to lack of iron which they do not possess. They are ferocious among these other people who are cowardly to an excessive degree, but I make no more account of them than of the rest. These are those who have intercourse with the women of "Matinino," which is the first island met on the way from Spain to the Indies, in which there is not a man. The women engage in no feminine occupation, but use bows and arrows of cane, like those already mentioned, and they arm and protect themselves with plates of copper, of which they have much.²⁸

In another island, which they assure me is larger than Española, the people have no hair.²⁹ In it, there is gold incalculable, and from it and from the other islands, I bring with me Indians as evidence.³⁰

In conclusion, to speak only of that which has been accomplished on this voyage, which was so hasty, their highnesses can see that I will give them as much gold as they may need, if their highnesses will render me very slight assistance; moreover, spice and cotton, as much as their highnesses shall command; and mastic,³¹ as much as they shall order to be shipped and which, up to now, has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios,³² and the Seignory³³ sells it for what it pleases; and aloe wood, as much as they shall order to be shipped, and slaves, as many as they shall order to be shipped and who will be from the idolaters.³⁴ And I believe that I have found rhubarb and cinnamon,³⁵ and I shall find a thousand other things of value, which the people whom I have left there will have discovered, for I have not delayed at any point, so far as the wind allowed me to sail, except in the town of Navidad, in order to leave it secured and well established, and in truth, I should have done much more, if the ships had served me, as reason demanded.

This is enough . . . and the eternal God, our Lord, Who gives to all those who walk in His way triumph over things which appear to be impossible, and this was notably one; for, although men have talked or have written of these lands, all was conjectural, without suggestion of ocular evidence, but amounted only to this, that those who heard for the most part listened and judged it to be rather a fable than as having any vestige of truth. So that, since Our Redeemer³⁶ has given this victory to our most illustrious king and queen, and to their renowned kingdoms, in so

great a matter, for this all Christendom ought to feel delight and make great feasts and give solemn thanks to the Holy Trinity³⁷ with many solemn prayers for the great exaltation which they shall have, in the turning of so many people to our holy faith, and afterwards for temporal benefits, for not only Spain but all Christians will have hence refreshment and gain.

This in accordance with that which has been accomplished, thus briefly.

Done in the caravel,³⁸ off the Canary Islands, on the fifteenth of February, in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-three.

At your orders.

El Almirante.³⁹

Notes

1. An inexact term that referred not just to India but the entire area of the Indian Ocean and East Asia.
2. The Tainos, a tribal branch of the Arawak language family. Arawak speakers inhabited an area from the Amazon River to the Caribbean.
3. The "Holy Savior," Jesus Christ.
4. "Holy Mary of the Immaculate Conception," the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, who Catholics believe was absolutely sinless, to the point of being conceived without the stain of Original Sin (the sin of Adam and Eve) on her soul.
5. Named for Prince Juan, heir apparent of Castile.
6. The Spanish term for *Cathay*. Technically Cathay was that area along China's northern frontier ruled from 907 to 1125 by the Khitans, a proto-Mongol people. Columbus understood Cathay to be the entire Chinese Empire of the Great Khan, not realizing that the Chinese had expelled the Mongol khans in the mid fourteenth century. (See Volume I, Chapter 12, sources 103–107 for more on the Mongols.)
7. A league is three miles.
8. Columbus took seven Tainos on board at San Salvador to instruct them in Spanish and use them as guides and interpreters.
9. One of the Canary Islands.
10. Marco Polo described a number of islanders in South Asia who went naked. Compare also Columbus's description of this nudity with John Mandeville's account of the people of Sumatra (see Volume I, Chapter 12, source 109).
11. Compare this with Mandeville's description of the people of Sumatra's attitude toward possessions (see Volume I, Chapter 12, source 109).
12. A gold coin of considerable value that bore the seal of Castile.
13. The smallest and least valuable Spanish coin, worth about one-sixtieth of a castellano. Composed of billon, a mixture of copper and silver, it had a whitish hue; hence the name *blanca*, or "white."
14. The equivalent of about sixteen skeins, or balls, of spun textile.
15. Normally the term *idolator* means anyone who worships idols, or sacred statues, but it is uncertain exactly what Columbus means here. The Tainos worshipped a variety of deities and spirits known as *cemis*, whom they represented in stone statues and other handcrafted images, also known as *cemis*. (For further information on Taino *cemis*, see Volume I, Chapter 11, source 98). It is hard to imagine Columbus's not having seen carved *cemis*, which filled the Tainos' villages. To compound the problem of what Columbus meant by their not being idolaters, consider the next-to-last paragraph of this letter, in which the admiral refers to idolaters who will be enslaved.
16. A small, oared boat, often having one or two masts.
17. This is not totally accurate. Columbus's Taino interpreters knew only a little of the language of the Ciguayos, whom the admiral encountered on Española in January 1493 (note 27).
18. Which the Spaniards transformed into La Habana, or Havana.
19. Marco Polo reported the existence of tailed humans (possible orangutans) in the islands of Southeast Asia. John Mandeville also listed hairy persons who walked on all fours and climbed trees in his description of the various fantastic people who supposedly inhabited the islands of Southeast Asia.
20. The Mongol emperor of Cathay.

21. The “Village of the Nativity” (of the Lord). The destruction of the *Santa Maria* off the coast of Española on Christmas Day (Navidad del Señor) forced Columbus to leave behind thirty-nine sailors at the garrison, which he named after the day of the incident.
22. When Columbus returned in November 1493, he discovered the entire garrison had been killed by the native inhabitants in reaction to abuses. Some of Columbus’s actions prior to departing to Europe, such as his staging a mock battle, suggest that he was uneasy about leaving these men behind and wanted to impress the Tainos with a display of Spanish firepower and fighting skills.
23. Generally only chiefs could afford large numbers of wives because of the substantial bride prices that were paid in goods or services to women’s families. Notwithstanding, many commoners could and did have two or three wives.
24. See note 11.
25. Europeans were prepared to find various races of monster humans and semihumans in the Indies. Accepted accounts of the wonders of the East, such as the travelogue of John Mandeville, told of dog-headed people and a species of individuals who, lacking heads, had eyes on their shoulders. Such stories had been inherited from ancient Greek, Roman, and Arabic ethnographies.
26. Sub-Saharan West Africa (see Volume I, Chapter 12, source 111).
27. The Caribs, who shortly before the arrival of Columbus began to displace the Arawak peoples of the Lesser Antilles, the archipelago to the east and south of Hispaniola. Sixteenth-century Spanish writers unanimously agreed that the Caribs were fierce warriors and cannibalistic. On January 13, 1493, Columbus and his men had a short skirmish on Española with some previously unknown natives, whom the admiral incorrectly assumed were Caribs. They were actually Ciguayos, who were less peaceful than the Tainos.
28. This same account appears in Columbus’s log. Father Ramón Pane, who composed an ethnographic study of Taino culture during Columbus’s second voyage of 1493–1494 (see Volume I, Chapter 11, source 98), also related in great detail the legend of the island of Matinino, where only women resided. As reported by Pane, however, the story contains no hint that these were warlike women. Apparently Columbus took this Taino legend and combined it with the Greco-Roman myth of the warrior Amazons. Mandeville wrote of the land of Amazonia, populated totally by warrior women, and Marco Polo described two Asian islands, one inhabited solely by women and another exclusively by men. There is no evidence that the female society reported by Columbus and Pane ever existed in the Caribbean. The Tainos, however, who were essentially a stone-age people, did import from South America an alloy of copper and gold, which they used for ornaments.
29. John Mandeville described people with little body hair, and Marco Polo told of Buddhist monks whose heads and faces were shaved.
30. Columbus brought seven Tainos back to Spain, where they were baptized, with King Ferdinand and Prince Juan acting as godparents. One remained at the Spanish court, where he died, and the others returned with Columbus on his second voyage of 1493.
31. Columbus and his men mistook a native gumbo-limbo tree, which does contain an aromatic resin, for the rare mastic tree, whose costly resin was a profitable trade item for Genoa (note 33).
32. An island in the eastern Mediterranean.
33. The ruling body of Genoa, an Italian city-state. Chios was a possession of Genoa, whose merchants controlled the mastic trade.
34. Church law forbade the enslavement of Christians, except in the most exceptional circumstances.
35. Actually when members of the crew showed Columbus what they thought were aloe, mastic, and cinnamon, the admiral accepted the aloe and mastic as genuine but rejected the supposed cinnamon. One of his lieutenants reported seeing rhubarb while on a scouting expedition.
36. Jesus Christ.
37. The Christian belief of three divine persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—contained in a single divine essence.
38. A Spanish ocean-going ship.
39. The Admiral.

Interpreting Columbus's Letter

Columbus's letter contains a number of interesting and potentially important facts. For example, the natives Columbus initially encountered were largely homogeneous and communicated with one another through interisland travel. Yet as fascinating and important as these facts are, knowing them does not necessarily make you (or anyone else) a historian. Similarly, garnering such isolated items from a source does not constitute full historical analysis. True historical analysis consists of drawing as much inferential insight as possible from a source and trying to answer, at least in part, the central question of historical study: What does it all mean? This document allows us to do just that.

Historians use no secret method or magic formula to draw historical insights from documentary evidence. All they need are attention to detail, thoroughness, common sense, and a willingness to enter imaginatively into the mind of the document's author as fully and honestly as possible, while trying to set aside personal values and perspectives. Anyone who is willing to work at it can profitably interpret written primary sources.

The researcher always has to evaluate the worth of each source, which means understanding its point of view and reliability. In this letter several things are obvious. Columbus believed he had reached Asian islands. John Mandeville's *Travels* and other accounts of Asia provided a number of reference points by which to recognize the Orient, and Columbus believed he had found many of them. Equally obvious is the fact that Columbus tried to present his discoveries in the best light possible. He sent this letter ahead to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella to ensure that when he arrived he would be received with due honor.

Certainly there is exaggeration, self-puffery, error, and possibly even deliberate distortion in this account. As the introduction to the letter informs us, Columbus overestimated the size of several islands, and except for chilies, the spices he claimed to have discovered proved to be mirages. The admiral also failed to mention that the *Santa Maria* had been lost. There is no way he could escape informing his royal patrons of this unhappy incident, but presumably Columbus wanted to wait until he was at the court, where he could put his own spin on the facts surrounding the incident. Also not mentioned is a skirmish that he and his men had on January 13, 1493, with some hostile strangers, whom he incorrectly assumed were Caribs. Perhaps that incident, if reported without explanation, would have weakened the admiral's claim that Spain could easily subjugate these timid Indians. Generally, however, despite Columbus's enthusiasm and understandable tendency to exaggerate, to conveniently neglect to mention anything negative, and to see what he wanted to see, the admiral *seems* to have wanted to present an essentially factual account—at least that is how it appears to us.

Columbus's reading of popular travel accounts had prepared him to encounter every sort of human monstrosity, and undoubtedly he would have enjoyed reporting such contacts. But he honestly reported that all the natives he encountered were quite unmonstrous in appearance and temperament. Of course the admiral reported stories of people with tails, cannibals, and warlike women who lived apart from men, but it is unlikely that he was deliberately misleading anyone on this issue. The Carib cannibals were real enough. Rumors of tailed people and latter-day Amazons conceivably were nothing more than the natives' trying to please Columbus or simply the result of poor communication. It is not difficult to imagine that the admiral inquired after the locations of those various human curiosities whom Mandeville, Polo, and others had placed in the islands of the Indian Ocean and that the Tainos, not knowing what he was asking, agreeably pointed across the waters to other islands.

In fact this raises one issue that has long vexed us and that goes straight to the heart of the question of this source's overall reliability: *How well was Columbus able to communicate with these people?* Columbus insisted that through gestures and learned words the Spaniards and Tainos were able to communicate with one another, and he certainly learned enough of the Tainos' language to report that they called the island on which he initially landed *Guanahani*. Nevertheless, we suspect that only the most primitive forms of communication were possible between Europeans and Native Americans in 1492–1493. Therefore we should have a healthy skepticism about anything that Columbus reports about the Tainos' beliefs and cosmological perspectives.

Still, all things considered, it seems reasonable to conclude that Columbus's letter can be accepted as a generally honest if not totally accurate account of his discoveries and experiences. That basic honesty, compromised to an extent by an understandable enthusiasm and desire to present his accomplishments positively, comes through in his attempt to describe the islands' physical qualities as well as the people he encountered there. The picture that emerges tells us a lot about the complex motives that underlay his great adventure.

We notice that Columbus had matter of factly taken possession of the lands in the names of the monarchs of Spain and even renamed the islands without once giving thought to the claims of anyone else. He also thought nothing of seizing some natives as soon as he arrived and of carrying several Indians back to Spain. Moreover, he noted toward the end of his letter that the monarchs of Spain could obtain as many *slaves* as they desired from among the islands "idolaters." At the same time (and this might strike the modern student as curious), Columbus claimed that he had always acted kindly toward the native people, and his letter conveys a tone of admiration and even affection for the people whom he had encountered. Indeed the admiral expressed a deep interest in protecting and winning over the native people of the Indies in an avowed hope that they might become Christians and loyal subjects of Ferdinand and Isabella. According to Columbus, the Indians' intelligence, timidity, naiveté, ignorance, sense of wonder at the Europeans, and ability to communicate freely among themselves made them prime candidates for conversion. It also made them ripe for subjugation, however.

The tone of this letter suggests that Columbus was concerned with these people as humans and genuinely interested in helping them achieve salvation through conversion. It is equally clear, however, that Columbus believed it to be his and Catholic Spain's right and duty to subjugate and exploit these same people. Here we see a tension that continued throughout the Spanish colonial experience in the Americas.

Subjugation of the Indians and their lands involved more than just a sense of divine mission and Christian altruism—as real as those motives were. Columbus, his royal patrons, and most others who joined overseas adventures expected to gain in earthly wealth, as well. Even a superficial reading of his letter reveals the admiral's preoccupation with the riches of the islands—riches that it seems he knowingly exaggerated. (See note 35 regarding the supposed discovery of cinnamon.) Gold, spices, cotton, aromatic mastic, and, of course, slaves were the material rewards that awaited Christian Europeans. Columbus was fully interested in these rewards and wanted Ferdinand and Isabella to underwrite future trips so that he could discover them in abundance. So while exaggeration can be found in this account, it seems to be exaggeration based on conviction.

Was Columbus being cynical, hypocritical, or deliberately ironic when in his closing words he claimed that Jesus Christ had provided this great victory to the Spanish monarchs (and indeed to all Christendom) and from that would flow the dual benefits of the conversion of so many people and worldly riches? Cynicism, hypocrisy, and conscious irony are not likely

explanations. It seems more likely that these closing remarks reveal the mind of a man who saw no contradictions between spreading the faith and benefiting materially from that action, even if doing so meant exploiting the converts.

Please note that in presenting this insight we have tried to avoid intruding any moral judgments. This does not mean that, as far as our own standards of right and wrong are concerned, we accept slavery as justifiable or believe it is proper to dispossess people of their lands and cultures. What it does mean is that we are trying to understand Columbus and his world view, not sit in judgment of a society whose values were in some respects radically different from those of our own. Passing moral judgment on a distant society's actions might be emotionally satisfying, but it will not change what has happened. Doing so also could conceivably blind the judge to the historical context in which those actions took place. As suggested earlier, we study the past in order to gain insight and wisdom regarding the human condition. If that insight is to have any validity, it must be based on as dispassionate a study of the evidence as possible.

Another point merits mention here. Perhaps you disagree with our conclusion that Columbus's letter is basically an honest and valuable source, despite its shortcomings. If you do, you are in excellent company. Two eminent historians—William D. Phillips, Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips, in their book *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus*—characterize this letter as “a tissue of exaggerations, misconceptions, and outright lies.” We obviously disagree with these authors in our interpretation of the degree, nature, and extent of the letter's misstatements. Well, no historian is infallible, and certainly we do not claim that distinction. Moreover, no source is so clear in all respects that it presents no areas of potential disagreement for historians. That, in fact, is one of the exciting aspects of historical research. Despite all the facts and conclusions that historians generally agree on, there are numerous areas in which they carry on spirited debate. The very nature of history's fragmentary, flawed evidence makes debate inevitable.

What is more, no historian can possibly see everything there is to be seen in every source. What this means, so far as you are concerned, is that there is plenty of latitude in the sources that appear in this book for you to arrive at insights that are unique to you. In so doing, however, you must at all times attempt to divorce yourself of present mindedness and to enter imaginatively into the world of the author whose work you are analyzing. You will note that, as is the case with this letter from Columbus, we have endeavored to help you do this through suggested Questions for Analysis that often are quite leading—perhaps too leading. Do not be constrained by these questions. If you find a question misleading or wrong headed in its presumed assumptions, feel free to follow your own mind. Just be ready to defend the questions you have chosen to ask along with the conclusions you have reached in answering them.

We could ask many other questions of Columbus's letter and garner other insights from it. Certainly it tells us a lot about Taino culture. Despite his cultural blinders, his naiveté, his tendency to see what he wanted to see, and his probably exaggerated belief in his ability to communicate with these people, Columbus seems to be a reasonably accurate and perceptive observer. Thus anyone interested in what the cultures of the Caribbean peoples were like before the Europeans had much of a chance to influence them must necessarily look to this and similar accounts of first contacts. In fact it would be good practice for you, right now, to try to answer question 7, which we have deliberately left unanswered. You will be surprised at how much you can learn about the Tainos from this brief description. As you do this exercise, however, do not forget to ask yourself constantly: How reliable does Columbus appear to be on this specific point, and why do I conclude this?

After you have tested your own powers of historical analysis in this little exercise, it would be wise to put the letter aside for the present. We trust that by now you have a good idea of how to examine and mine a documentary source. Now let us consider artifacts.

Unwritten Sources

Historians distinguish between the prehistorical and historical past, with the chief defining feature of any historical culture being that it provides written records from which we can reconstruct its past. Without a large volume and variety of documentary sources, it is impossible to write any society's history in detail. This is not to say that the unwritten relics of the past are worthless. Archeology proves their value, and even historians use such sources. As a rule, however, no matter how extensive a culture's physical remains might be, if it has not left us records we can read, its history largely remains a closed book. The ancient civilizations of Harappan India and Minoan Crete, for example, knew and practiced the art of writing, but until we learn how to decipher their texts, we can draw only vague pictures of their respective histories.

Given the central role documents play in our reconstruction of the past, it should surprise no one to learn that most historians concentrate their research almost exclusively on written sources. Yet historians would be foolish to overlook *any* piece of evidence from the past. As we suggested earlier, photographs could be a rich source for anyone researching the history of your class. Our future historian might also want to study all of the extant souvenirs and supplies sold in your school's bookstore. Examined properly they could help fill in some gaps in the story of your class's cultural history.

Artifacts can be illuminating, particularly when used in conjunction with written records. Coins can tell us a lot about a society's ideals or its leaders' programs. Art in its many forms can reveal the interests, attitudes, and modes of perception of various segments of society, from the elites to the masses. More down-to-earth items, such as domestic utensils and tools, allow us to infer quite a bit about the lives of common individuals. In this book we concentrate largely on written sources, for reasons already outlined. It would be wrong, however, if we totally overlooked artifacts. So scattered throughout these chapters you will find important pieces of non-written evidence. Let us look at an example and proceed to "read" it.

An Anonymous Woodcut of 1511

Columbus arrived in Barcelona in April 1493 to learn not only his letter had arrived, but it had already been published and publicly circulated. Within months the letter was translated into several languages; the Latin translation alone went through nine editions, several of which were lavishly illustrated, before the end of 1494. Printers discovered that educated Europeans had an almost insatiable desire to learn about the peoples and lands Columbus and other explorers were discovering, and they catered to that interest. Their clientele wanted not only to read about the fascinating peoples, plants, and animals of these lands—they wanted also to see them. Consequently, as books on the new explorations proliferated, so did the number of printed illustrations. Many are quite fanciful and tell us more about the Europeans who created them than the peoples and regions they supposedly portrayed. The woodcut print we have chosen appeared in a popular English pamphlet of 1511.



Questions For Analysis

1. What scene has the artist set? What has the artist placed to the immediate right of the standing man, and what function does it have in this scene?
2. What do each person's actions, dress, and demeanor tell us about her or him?
3. What does this illustration tell us about popular European notions concerning the natives of the New World?

Interpreting the Woodcut

What a charming, even idyllic domestic scene. An attractive mother nurses an infant at her breast while amusing an older child with a feather. A well-muscled, equally attractive, and proud father stands nearby, holding the tools of his trade while next to him the family's dinner is slowly cooking. Dinner, of course, may strike us as macabre, as these are cannibals, and it looks like roast European is on the menu. The tools of the father's trade are weapons. Both children are naked, and the parents are virtually nude, save for what appear to be leaves that cover their

loins, decorative necklaces, armbands and anklets of some indeterminate material, and feathers in their hair.

What is the message? What we have is a reprise of the image provided by Columbus in his letter of 1493: the *noble savage*. These are fully human beings with human bonds and affections. Yet they are still savages, as their clothing (or lack of it), decorations, weapons, and choice of food would have suggested to most sixteenth-century Europeans. Here, as Columbus and many of those who followed agreed, were a people who could become Christians but who also, by virtue of their backwardness, were to be subjugated. There is something appealing about their innocent savagery, but what of that poor fellow whose severed leg and head are slowly roasting?

Have we read too much into the woodcut? It is arguable that we may have. The historian always faces this problem when trying to analyze an isolated piece of evidence, particularly a nonverbal source. Yet this artifact is not completely isolated, for we brought to its analysis insight gained from documentary evidence—Columbus's letter. That is how we generally read the artifacts of historical cultures. We attempt to place them in the context of what we have already learned or inferred from documentary sources. Documents illuminate artifacts, and artifacts make more vivid and tangible the often shadowy world of words.

As you attempt to interpret the unwritten sources in this book, keep in mind what you have learned from the documents you have already read, your textbook, and class lectures. Remember that we have chosen these artifacts to illustrate broad themes and general trends. You should not find their messages overly subtle. As with the documents, always try to place each piece of nonverbal evidence into its proper context, and in that regard, read the introductions and Questions for Analysis very carefully. We will do our best to provide you with all the information and clues you need.

Good luck and have fun!

Reading 1

HOMER, THE ILIAD

Introduction by Michael Graham

The *Iliad* is one of the earliest works in western literature. It is an epic poem attributed to an author named Homer, said to have been blind, who lived somewhere in Greece around 800–750 B.C. The *Iliad* takes its name from Ilium, the Greek word for Troy, a city in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). It describes the efforts of the Greeks (referred to in the poem as “Achaeans”) to capture the city of Troy. The site of Troy was excavated by archaeologists in the nineteenth century, and there is evidence that a city on the site was destroyed by fire between about 1250 and 1225 B.C., suggesting that Homer’s poem may be based on actual events. But the precise details will never be known, and we must treat the *Iliad* more as a work of literature than history. It may not offer us a documentary history of the Trojan War, but it does offer us substantial insights into the mentality of the Greeks of Homer’s time—their values, their beliefs, their ethical codes and how they thought the world operated.

Even in translation (which can almost never do full justice to an original work), the *Iliad* is a feast of language. We must keep in mind that it was intended to be recited aloud. The vast majority of the Greeks of Homer’s time were illiterate, so they would have heard this poem, rather than reading it. And while written copies of the poem circulated for centuries, it was not actually published for the first time until 1488, at which point the poem was already more than 2200 years old. Therefore, we should see this poem as part of a Greek oral tradition; indeed, much of the education of a Greek boy in the Classical era would have involved memorizing Homer’s poetry for recitation, and it is quite possible, even likely, that details would have been modified as the work was passed on. So when you are reading this section of the *Iliad* (which includes the first two “books” out of a total of twenty-four), take some time to read aloud, and imagine yourself as a listener rather than a reader.

When the poem begins, the Achaeans have been battling the Trojans for ten years. Troy has not fallen, but there has been a falling-out within the ranks of the Achaeans. Achilles, one of the Achaean commanders, is angry at Agamemnon, king of Mycenae and general of all the Achaean forces. As you read it will become clear what the disagreement is about. What caused it, and what does this say about the values of these men? Are either of them presented in a way which makes them seem heroic? What makes someone a hero in this story? The first two books raise other issues as well. In book two you will meet Helen of Troy. What role does she play in this conflict between the Achaeans and the Trojans? What sort of character is she? You might extend this question to all the female characters who appear in the poem. What does this tell you

about gender relations in ancient Greek society? You will also notice that the gods seem to take an active interest in the various conflicts presented in the story. For example, Achilles' mother is the sea-goddess Thetis, and she tries to help him out. How does she go about doing this, and what does this tell us about Greek perceptions of the gods? How would you compare the behavior of Zeus, king of the gods, with the behavior of the Judeo-Christian God as presented in the Bible? Do these gods seem trustworthy? What ethical values do these Greeks seem to have held dear? Did they value mercy or compassion? Parts of book two may seem to you like an endless recitation of names. Why do you think the poet thought it was important to include all this information?

We hope that after reading books one and two, you will have become absorbed enough in the story to want to know how it turned out, so we won't spoil things by giving away the outcome here. But even if you find the *Iliad* not to your taste, you will have received a crash course in Greek values the same way that many ancient Greeks learned them: through the poetry of Homer.

THE ILIAD

Homer

BOOK ONE

The Rage of Achilles

Rage—Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles,
murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses,
hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls,
great fighters' souls, but made their bodies carrion,
feasts for the dogs and birds,
and the will of Zeus was moving toward its end.
Begin, Muse, when the two first broke and clashed,
Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles.

What god drove them to fight with such a fury?

Apollo the son of Zeus and Leto. Incensed at the king
he swept a fatal plague through the army—men were dying
and all because Agamemnon spurned Apollo's priest.

10

Yes, Chryses approached the Achaeans' fast ships
to win his daughter back, bringing a priceless ransom
and bearing high in hand, wound on a golden staff,
the wreaths of the god, the distant deadly Archer.
He begged the whole Achaean army but most of all
the two supreme commanders, Atreus' two sons,

"Agamemnon, Menelaus—all Argives geared for war!

May the gods who hold the halls of Olympus give you
Priam's city to plunder, then safe passage home.

20

Just set my daughter free, my dear one . . . here,
accept these gifts, this ransom. Honor the god
who strikes from worlds away—the son of Zeus, Apollo!"

Homer, *The Iliad* (Robert Fagles, trans.), Penguin, 1990 (ISBN 0-14-044592-7), original pp. 77–127.

And all ranks of Achaeans cried out their assent:
 “Respect the priest, accept the shining ransom!”
 But it brought no joy to the heart of Agamemnon.
 The king dismissed the priest with a brutal order
 ringing in his ears: “Never again, old man,
 let me catch sight of you by the hollow ships!
 Not loitering now, not slinking back tomorrow.
 The staff and the wreaths of god will never save you then.
 The girl—I won’t give up the girl. Long before that,
 old age will overtake her in *my* house, in Argos,
 far from her fatherland, slaving back and forth
 at the loom, forced to share my bed!

30

Now go,
 don’t tempt my wrath—and you may depart alive.”

The old man was terrified. He obeyed the order,
 turning, trailing away in silence down the shore
 where the battle lines of breakers crash and drag.
 And moving off to a safe distance, over and over
 the old priest prayed to the son of sleek-haired Leto,
 lord Apollo, “Hear me, Apollo! God of the silver bow
 who strides the walls of Chryse and Cilla sacrosanct—
 lord in power of Tenedos—Smintheus, god of the plague!
 If I ever roofed a shrine to please your heart,
 ever burned the long rich bones of bulls and goats
 on your holy altar, now, now bring my prayer to pass.
 Pay the Danaans back—your arrows for my tears!”

40

His prayer went up and Phoebus Apollo heard him.
 Down he strode from Olympus’ peaks, storming at heart
 with his bow and hooded quiver slung across his shoulders.
 The arrows clanged at his back as the god quaked with rage,
 the god himself on the march and down he came like night.
 Over against the ships he dropped to a knee, let fly a shaft
 and a terrifying clash rang out from the great silver bow.
 First he went for the mules and circling dogs but then,
 launching a piercing shaft at the men themselves,
 he cut them down in droves—
 and the corpse-fires burned on, night and day, no end in sight.

50

60

Nine days the arrows of god swept through the army.
 On the tenth Achilles called all ranks to muster—
 the impulse seized him, sent by white-armed Hera
 grieving to see Achaean fighters drop and die.
 Once they’d gathered, crowding the meeting grounds,
 the swift runner Achilles rose and spoke among them:
 “Son of Atreus, now we are beaten back, I fear,

the long campaign is lost. So home we sail . . .
if we can escape our death—if war and plague
are joining forces now to crush the Argives.

70

But wait: let us question a holy man,
a prophet, even a man skilled with dreams—
dreams as well can come our way from Zeus—
come, someone to tell us why Apollo rages so,
whether he blames us for a vow we failed, or sacrifice.
If only the god would share the smoky savor of lambs
and full-grown goats, Apollo might be willing, still,
somehow, to save us from this plague.”

So he proposed
and down he sat again as Calchas rose among them,
Thester’s son, the clearest by far of all the seers
who scan the flight of birds. He knew all things that are,
all things that are past and all that are to come,
the seer who had led the Argive ships to Troy
with the second sight that god Apollo gave him.
For the armies’ good the seer began to speak:

80

“Achilles, dear to Zeus . . .
you order me to explain Apollo’s anger,
the distant deadly Archer? I will tell it all.
But strike a pact with me, swear you will defend me
with all your heart, with words and strength of hand.
For there is a man I will enrage—I see it now—
a powerful man who lords it over all the Argives,
one the Achaeans must obey . . . A mighty king,
raging against an inferior, is too strong.
Even if he can swallow down his wrath today,
still he will nurse the burning in his chest
until, sooner or later, he sends it bursting forth.
Consider it closely, Achilles. Will you save me?”

90

And the matchless runner reassured him: “Courage!
Out with it now, Calchas. Reveal the will of god,
whatever you may know. And I swear by Apollo
dear to Zeus, the power you pray to, Calchas,
when you reveal god’s will to the Argives—no one,
not while I am alive and see the light on earth, no one
will lay his heavy hands on you by the hollow ships.
None among all the armies. Not even if you mean
Agamemnon here who now claims to be, by far,
the best of the Achaeans.”

100

The seer took heart
and this time he spoke out, bravely: “Beware—
he casts no blame for a vow we failed, a sacrifice.
The god’s enraged because Agamemnon spurned his priest,

110

he refused to free his daughter, he refused the ransom.
That's why the Archer sends us pains and he will send us more
and never drive this shameful destruction from the Argives,
not till we give back the girl with sparkling eyes
to her loving father—no price, no ransom paid—
and carry a sacred hundred bulls to Chryse town.
Then we can calm the god, and only then appease him.”

So he declared and sat down. But among them rose
the fighting son of Atreus, lord of the far-flung kingdoms, 120
Agamemnon—furious, his dark heart filled to the brim,
blazing with anger now, his eyes like searing fire.
With a sudden, killing look he wheeled on Calchas first:
“Seer of misery! Never a word that works to my advantage!
Always misery warms your heart, your prophecies—
never a word of profit said or brought to pass.
Now, again, you divine god's will for the armies,
bruit it about, as fact, why the deadly Archer
multiplies our pains: because I, I refused 130
that glittering price for the young girl Chryseis.
Indeed, I prefer *her* by far, the girl herself,
I want her mine in my own house! I rank her higher
than Clytemnestra, my wedded wife—she's nothing less
in build or breeding, in mind or works of hand.
But I am willing to give her back, even so,
if that is best for all. What I really want
is to keep my people safe, not see them dying.
But fetch me another prize, and straight off too,
else I alone of the Argives go without my honor.
That would be a disgrace. You are all witness, 140
look—*my* prize is snatched away!”

But the swift runner
Achilles answered him at once, “Just how, Agamemnon,
great field marshal . . . most grasping man alive,
how can the generous Argives give you prizes now?
I know of no troves of treasure, piled, lying idle,
anywhere. Whatever we dragged from towns we plundered,
all's been portioned out. But collect it, call it back
from the rank and file? *That* would be the disgrace.
So return the girl to the god, at least for now.
We Achaeans will pay you back, three, four times over, 150
if Zeus will grant us the gift, somehow, someday,
to raze Troy's massive ramparts to the ground.”

But King Agamemnon countered, “Not so quickly,
brave as you are, godlike Achilles—trying to cheat *me*.
Oh no, you won't get past me, take me in that way!

What do you want? To cling to your own prize
while I sit calmly by—empty-handed here?

No—if our generous Argives *will* give me a prize,
a match for my desires, equal to what I've lost,
well and good. But if they give me nothing

160

I will take a prize myself—your own, or Ajax'
or Odysseus' prize—I'll commandeer her myself
and let that man I go to visit choke with rage!

Enough. We'll deal with all this later, in due time.

Now come, we haul a black ship down to the bright sea,
gather a decent number of oarsmen along her locks
and put abroad a sacrifice, and Chryseis herself,
in all her beauty . . . we embark her too.

Let one of the leading captains take command.

170

Ajax, Idomeneus, trusty Odysseus or you, Achilles,
you—the most violent man alive—so you can perform
the rites for us and calm the god yourself."

A dark glance

and the headstrong runner answered him in kind: "Shameless—
armored in shamelessness—always shrewd with greed!

How could an Argive soldier obey your orders,
freely and gladly do your sailing for you
or fight your enemies, full force? Not I, no.

It wasn't Trojan spearmen who brought me here to fight.

The Trojans never did *me* damage, not in the least,
they never stole my cattle or my horses, never

180

in Phthia where the rich soil breeds strong men
did they lay waste my crops. How could they?

Look at the endless miles that lie between us . . .

shadowy mountain ranges, seas that surge and thunder.

No, you colossal, shameless—we all followed you,

to please you, to fight for you, to win your honor

back from the Trojans—Menelaus and you, you dog-face!

What do *you* care? Nothing. You don't look right or left.

And now you threaten to strip me of my prize in person—

190

the one I fought for long and hard, and sons of Achaea
handed her to me.

My honors never equal yours,
whenever we sack some wealthy Trojan stronghold—
my arms bear the brunt of the raw, savage fighting,
true, but when it comes to dividing up the plunder
the lion's share is yours, and back I go to my ships,
clutching some scrap, some pittance that I love,
when I have fought to exhaustion.

No more now—

back I go to Phthia. Better that way by far,
to journey home in the beaked ships of war.

200

I have no mind to linger here disgraced,
brimming your cup and piling up your plunder.”

But the lord of men Agamemnon shot back,
“*Desert*, by all means—if the spirit drives you home!
I will never beg you to stay, not on *my* account.
Never—others will take my side and do me honor,
Zeus above all, whose wisdom rules the world.
You—I hate you most of all the warlords
loved by the gods. Always dear to your heart,
strife, yes, and battles, the bloody grind of war. 210
What if you are a great soldier? That’s just a gift of god.
Go home with your ships and comrades, lord it over your Myrmidons!
You *are* nothing to me—you and your overweening anger!
But let this be my warning on your way:
since Apollo insists on taking my Chryseis,
I’ll send her back in my own ships with *my* crew.
But I, I will be there in person at your tents
to take *Briseis* in all her beauty, your own prize—
so you can learn just how much greater I am than you
and the next man up may shrink from matching words with me, 220
from hoping to rival Agamemnon strength for strength!”

He broke off and anguish gripped Achilles.
The heart in his rugged chest was pounding, torn . . .
Should he draw the long sharp sword slung at his hip,
thrust through the ranks and kill Agamemnon now?—
or check his rage and beat his fury down?
As his racing spirit veered back and forth,
just as he drew his huge blade from its sheath,
down from the vaulting heavens swept Athena,
the white-armed goddess Hera sped her down: 230
Hera loved both men and cared for both alike.
Rearing behind him Pallas seized his fiery hair—
only Achilles saw her, none of the other fighters—
struck with wonder he spun around, he knew her at once,
Pallas Athena! the terrible blazing of those eyes,
and his winged words went flying: “Why, why now?
Child of Zeus with the shield of thunder, why come now?
To witness the outrage Agamemnon just committed?
I tell you this, and so help me it’s the truth—
he’ll soon pay for his arrogance with his life!” 240

Her gray eyes clear, the goddess Athena answered,
“Down from the skies I come to check your rage
if only you will yield.
The white-armed goddess Hera sped me down:

she loves you both, she cares for you both alike.
 Stop this fighting, now. Don't lay hand to sword.
 Lash him with threats of the price that he will face.
 And I tell you this—and I *know* it is the truth—
 one day glittering gifts will lie before you,
 three times over to pay for all his outrage.
 Hold back now. Obey us both.”

250

So she urged
 and the swift runner complied at once: “I must—
 when the two of you hand down commands, Goddess,
 a man submits though his heart breaks with fury.
 Better for him by far. If a man obeys the gods
 they're quick to hear his prayers.”

And with that
 Achilles stayed his burly hand on the silver hilt
 and slid the huge blade back in its sheath.
 He would not fight the orders of Athena.
 Soaring home to Olympus, she rejoined the gods
 aloft in the halls of Zeus whose shield is thunder.

260

But Achilles rounded on Agamemnon once again,
 lashing out at him, not relaxing his anger for a moment:
 “Staggering drunk, with your dog's eyes, your fawn's heart!
 Never once did you arm with the troops and go to battle
 or risk an ambush packed with Achaea's picked men—
 you lack the courage, you can see death coming.
Safer by far, you find, to foray all through camp,
commandeering the prize of any man who speaks against you.
King who devours his people! Worthless husks, the men you rule—

270

if not, Atrides, this outrage would have been your last.
 I tell you this, and I swear a mighty oath upon it . . .
 by this, this scepter, look,
 that never again will put forth crown and branches,
 now it's left its stump on the mountain ridge forever,
 nor will it sprout new green again, now the brazen ax
 has stripped its bark and leaves, and now the sons of Achaea
 pass it back and forth as they hand their judgments down,
 upholding the honored customs whenever Zeus commands—
 This scepter will be the mighty force behind my oath:
 someday, I swear, a yearning for Achilles will strike
 Achaea's sons and all your armies! But then, Atrides,
 harrowed as you will be, *nothing* you do can save you—
 not when your hordes of fighters drop and die,
 cut down by the hands of man-killing Hector! Then—
 then you will tear your heart out, desperate, raging
 that you disgraced the best of the Achaeans!”

280

Down on the ground

he dashed the scepter studded bright with golden nails,
 then took his seat again. The son of Atreus smoldered,
 glaring across at him, but Nestor rose between them,
 the man of winning words, the clear speaker of Pylos . . .
 Sweeter than honey from his tongue the voice flowed on and on.

290

Two generations of mortal men he had seen go down by now,
 those who were born and bred with him in the old days,
 in Pylos' holy realm, and now he ruled the third.
 He pleaded with both kings, with clear good will,
 "No more—or enormous sorrow comes to all Achaea!
 How they would exult, Priam and Priam's sons
 and all the Trojans. Oh they'd leap for joy
 to hear the two of you battling on this way,
 you who excel us all, first in Achaeon councils,
 first in the ways of war.

300

Stop. Please.

Listen to Nestor. You are both younger than I,
 and in my time I struck up with better men than you,
 even you, but never once did they make light of me.
 I've never seen such men, I never will again . . .
 men like Pirithous, Dryas, that fine captain,
 Caeneus and Exadius, and Polyphemus, royal prince,
 and Theseus, Aegeus' boy, a match for the immortals.
 They were the strongest mortals ever bred on earth,
 the strongest, and they fought against the strongest too,
 shaggy Centaurs, wild brutes of the mountains—
 they hacked them down, terrible, deadly work.
 And I was in their ranks, fresh out of Pylos,
 far away from home—they enlisted me themselves
 and I fought on my own, a free lance, single-handed.
 And none of the men who walk the earth these days
 could battle with those fighters, none, but they,
 they took to heart my counsels, marked my words.
 So now you listen too. Yielding is far better . . .
 Don't seize the girl, Agamemnon, powerful as you are—
 leave her, just as the sons of Achaea gave her,
 his prize from the very first.

310

And you, Achilles, never hope to fight it out
 with your king, pitting force against his force:
 no one can match the honors dealt a king, you know,
 a sceptered king to whom great Zeus gives glory.
 Strong as you are—a goddess was your mother—
 he has more power because he rules more men.

320

Atrides, end your anger—look, it's Nestor!

330

I beg you, cool your fury against Achilles.
 Here the man stands over all Achaea's armies,
 our rugged bulwark braced for shocks of war."

But King Agamemnon answered him in haste,
 “True, old man—all you say is fit and proper—
 but this soldier wants to tower over the armies,
 he wants to rule over all, to lord it over all,
 give out orders to every man in sight. Well,
 there’s one, I trust, who will never yield to *him*!
 What if the everlasting gods have made a spearman of him?
 Have they entitled him to hurl abuse at *me*?” 340

“Yes!”—blazing Achilles broke in quickly—
 “What a worthless, burnt-out coward I’d be called
 if I would submit to you and all your orders,
 whatever you blurt out. Fling them at others,
 don’t give me commands!
 Never again, *I* trust, will Achilles yield to *you*.
 And I tell you this—take it to heart, I warn you—
 my hand will never do battle for that girl,
 neither with you, King, nor any man alive. 350
 You Achaeans gave her, now you’ve snatched her back.
 But all the rest I possess beside my fast black ship—
 not one bit of it can you seize against my will, Atrides.
 Come, try it! So the men can see, that instant,
 your black blood gush and spurt around my spear!”

Once the two had fought it out with words,
 battling face-to-face, both sprang to their feet
 and broke up the muster beside the Argive squadrons.
 Achilles strode off to his trim ships and shelters,
 back to his friend Patroclus and their comrades. 360
 Agamemnon had a vessel hauled down to the sea,
 he picked out twenty oarsmen to man her locks,
 put aboard the cattle for sacrifice to the god
 and led Chryseis in all her beauty amidships.
 Versatile Odysseus took the helm as captain.

All embarked,

the party launched out on the sea’s foaming lanes
 while the son of Atreus told his troops to wash,
 to purify themselves from the filth of plague.
 They scoured it off, threw scourings in the surf
 and sacrificed to Apollo full-grown bulls and goats 370
 along the beaten shore of the fallow barren sea
 and savory smoke went swirling up the skies.

So the men were engaged throughout the camp.
 But King Agamemnon would not stop the quarrel,
 the first threat he hurled against Achilles.
 He called Talthybius and Eurybates briskly,

his two heralds, ready, willing aides:

“Go to Achilles’ lodge. Take Briseis at once,
his beauty Briseis by the hand and bring her here.
But if he will not surrender her, I’ll go myself,
I’ll seize her myself, with an army at my back—
and all the worse for him!”

380

He sent them off
with the strict order ringing in their ears.
Against their will the two men made their way
along the breaking surf of the barren salt sea
and reached the Myrmidon shelters and their ships.
They found him beside his lodge and black hull,
seated grimly—and Achilles took no joy
when he saw the two approaching.

They were afraid, they held the king in awe
and stood there, silent. Not a word to Achilles,
not a question. But he sensed it all in his heart,
their fear, their charge, and broke the silence for them:

390

“Welcome, couriers! Good heralds of Zeus and men,
here, come closer. You have done nothing to me.
You are not to blame. No one but Agamemnon—
he is the one who sent you for Briseis.
Go, Patroclus, Prince, bring out the girl
and hand her to them so they can take her back.
But let them both bear witness to my loss . . .
in the face of blissful gods and mortal men,
in the face of that unbending, ruthless king—
if the day should come when the armies need *me*
to save their ranks from ignominious, stark defeat.
The man is raving—with all the murderous fury in his heart.
He lacks the sense to see a day behind, a day ahead,
and safeguard the Achaeans battling by the ships.”

Patroclus obeyed his great friend’s command.
He led Briseis in all her beauty from the lodge
and handed her over to the men to take away.
And the two walked back along the Argive ships
while she trailed on behind, reluctant, every step.
But Achilles wept, and slipping away from his companions,
far apart, sat down on the beach of the heaving gray sea
and scanned the endless ocean. Reaching out his arms,
again and again he prayed to his dear mother: “Mother!
You gave me life, short as that life will be,
so at least Olympian Zeus, thundering up on high,
should give he honor—but now he gives me nothing.
Atreus’ son Agamemnon, for all his far-flung kingdoms—

410

420

the man disgraces me, seizes and keeps my prize,
he tears her away himself!"

So he wept and prayed
and his noble mother heard him, seated near her father,
the Old Man of the Sea in the salt green depths.
Suddenly up she rose from the churning surf
like mist and settling down beside him as he wept,
stroked Achilles gently, whispering his name, "My child—
why in tears? What sorrow has touched your heart?
Tell me, please. Don't harbor it deep inside you.
We must share it all."

And now from his depths 430
the proud runner groaned: "You know, you know,
why labor through it all? You know it all so well . . .

We raided Thebe once, Eetion's sacred citadel,
we ravaged the place, hauled all the plunder here
and the armies passed it round, share and share alike,
and they chose the beauty Chryseis for Agamemnon.
But soon her father, the holy priest of Apollo
the distant deadly Archer, Chryses approached
the fast trim ships of the Argives armed in bronze
to win his daughter back, bringing a priceless ransom 440
and bearing high in hand, wound on a golden staff,
the wreaths of the god who strikes from worlds away.
He begged the whole Achaeen army but most of all
the two supreme commanders, Atreus' two sons,
and all ranks of Achaeans cried out their assent,
'Respect the priest, accept the shining ransom!'
But it brought no joy to the heart of Agamemnon,
our high and mighty king dismissed the priest
with a brutal order ringing in his ears.

And shattered with anger, the old man withdrew 450
but Apollo heard his prayer—he loved him, deeply—
he loosed his shaft at the Argives, withering plague,
and now the troops began to drop and die in droves,
the arrows of god went showering left and right,
whipping through the Achaeans' vast encampment.
But the old seer who knew the cause full well
revealed the will of the archer god Apollo.

And I was the first, mother, I urged them all,
'Appease the god at once!' That's when the fury
gripped the son of Atreus. Agamemnon leapt to his feet 460
and hurled his threat—his threat's been driven home.

One girl, Chryseis, the fiery-eyed Achaeans
ferry out in a fast trim ship to Chryse Island,
laden with presents for the god. The other girl,

just now the heralds came and led her away from camp,
 Briseus' daughter, the prize the armies gave me.
 But you, mother, if you have any power at all,
 protect your son! Go to Olympus, plead with Zeus,
 if you ever warmed his heart with a word or any action . . .

Time and again I heard your claims in father's halls,
 boasting how you and you alone of all the immortals
 rescued Zeus, the lord of the dark storm cloud,
 from ignominious, stark defeat . . .

470

That day the Olympians tried to chain him down,
 Hera, Poseidon lord of the sea, and Pallas Athena—
 you rushed to Zeus, dear Goddess, broke those chains,
 quickly ordered the hundred-hander to steep Olympus,
 that monster whom the immortals call Briareus
 but every mortal calls the Sea-god's son, Aegaeon,
 though he's stronger than his father. Down he sat,
 flanking Cronus' son, gargantuan in the glory of it all,
 and the blessed gods were struck with terror then,
 they stopped shackling Zeus.

480

Remind him of that,
 now, go and sit beside him, grasp his knees . . .
 persuade him, somehow, to help the Trojan cause,
 to pin the Achaeans back against their ships,
 trap them round the bay and mow them down.
 So all can reap the benefits of their king—
 so even mighty Atrides can see how mad he was
 to disgrace Achilles, the best of the Achaeans!"

490

And Thetis answered, bursting into tears,
 "O my son, my sorrow, why did I ever bear you?
 All I bore was doom . . .
 Would to god you could linger by your ships
 without a grief in the world, without a torment!
 Doomed to a short life, you have so little time.
 And not only short, now, but filled with heartbreak too,
 more than all other men alive—doomed twice over.
 Ah to a cruel fate I bore you in our halls!
 Still, I shall go to Olympus crowned with snow
 and repeat your prayer to Zeus who loves the lightning.
 Perhaps he will be persuaded.

500

But you, my child,
 stay here by the fast ships, rage on at the Achaeans,
 just keep clear of every foray in the fighting.
 Only yesterday Zeus went off to the Ocean River
 to feast with the Aethiopians, loyal, lordly men,
 and all the gods went with him. But in twelve days

the Father returns to Olympus. Then, for your sake,
up I go to the bronze floor, the royal house of Zeus—
I'll grasp his knees, I think I'll win him over."

With that vow

510

his mother went away and left him there, alone,
his heart inflamed for the sashed and lovely girl
they'd wrenched away from him against his will.
Meanwhile Odysseus drew in close to Chryse Island,
bearing the splendid sacrifice in the vessel's hold.
And once they had entered the harbor deep in bays
they furled and stowed the sail in the black ship,
they lowered the mast by the forestays, smoothly,
quickly let it down on the forked mast-crutch
and rowed her into a mooring under oars.

520

Out went the bow-stones—cables fast astern—
and the crew themselves swung out in the breaking surf,
leading out the sacrifice for the archer god Apollo,
and out of the deep-sea ship Chryseis stepped too.
Then tactful Odysseus led her up to the altar,
placing her in her loving father's arms, and said,
"Chryses, the lord of men Agamemnon sent me here
to bring your daughter back and perform a sacrifice,
a grand sacrifice to Apollo—for all Achaea's sake—
so we can appease the god
who's loosed such grief and torment on the Argives."

530

With those words he left her in Chryses' arms
and the priest embraced the child he loved, exultant.
At once the men arranged the sacrifice for Apollo,
making the cattle ring his well-built altar,
then they rinsed their hands and took up barley.
Rising among them Chryses stretched his arms to the sky
and prayed in a high resounding voice, "Hear me, Apollo!
God of the silver bow who strides the walls of Chryse
and Cilla sacrosanct—lord in power of Tenedos!
If you honored me last time and heard my prayer
and rained destruction down on all Achaea's ranks,
now bring my prayer to pass once more. Now, at last,
drive this killing plague from the armies of Achaea!"

540

His prayer went up and Phoebus Apollo heard him.
And soon as the men had prayed and flung the barley,
first they lifted back the heads of the victims,
slit their throats, skinned them and carved away
the meat from the thighbones and wrapped them in fat,
a double fold sliced clean and topped with strips of flesh.
And the old man burned these over dried split wood

550

and over the quarters poured out glistening wine
 while young men at his side held five-pronged forks.
 Once they had burned the bones and tasted the organs
 they cut the rest into pieces, pierced them with spits,
 roasted them to a turn and pulled them off the fire.
 The work done, the feast laid out, they ate well
 and no man's hunger lacked a share of the banquet.
 When they had put aside desire for food and drink,
 the young men brimmed the mixing bowls with wine
 and tipping first drops for the god in every cup
 they poured full rounds for all. And all day long
 they appeased the god with song, raising a ringing hymn
 to the distant archer god who drives away the plague,
 those young Achaean warriors singing out his power,
 and Apollo listened, his great heart warm with joy.

560

Then when the sun went down and night came on
 they made their beds and slept by the stern-cables . . .
 When young Dawn with her rose-red fingers shone once more,
 they set sail for the main encampment of Achaea.
 The Archer sent them a bracing following wind,
 they stepped the mast, spread white sails wide,
 the wind hit full and the canvas bellied out
 and a dark blue wave, foaming up at the bow,
 sang out loud and strong as the ship made way,
 skimming the whitecaps, cutting toward her goal.
 And once offshore of Achaea's vast encampment
 they eased her in and hauled the black ship high,
 far up on the sand, and shored her up with timbers.
 Then they scattered, each to his own ship and shelter.

570

580

But *he* raged on, grimly camped by his fast fleet,
 the royal son of Peleus, the swift runner Achilles.
 Now he no longer haunted the meeting grounds
 where men win glory, now he no longer went to war
 but day after day he ground his heart out, waiting there,
 yearning, always yearning for battle cries and combat.

But now as the twelfth dawn after this shone clear
 the gods who live forever marched home to Olympus,
 all in a long cortege, and Zeus led them on.
 And Thetis did not forget her son's appeals.
 She broke from a cresting wave at first light
 and soaring up to the broad sky and Mount Olympus,
 found the son of Cronus gazing down on the world,
 peaks apart from the other gods and seated high
 on the topmost crown of rugged ridged Olympus.

590

And crouching down at his feet,
quickly grasping his knees with her left hand,
her right hand holding him underneath the chin,
she prayed to the lord god Zeus, the son of Cronus:

“Zeus, Father Zeus! If I ever served you well
among the deathless gods with a word or action,
bring this prayer to pass: honor my son Achilles!—
doomed to the shortest life of any man on earth.

And now the lord of men Agamemnon has disgraced him,
seizes and keeps his prize, tears her away himself. But you—
exalt him, Olympian Zeus: your urgings rule the world!
Come, grant the Trojans victory after victory
till the Achaen armies pay my dear son back,
building higher the honor he deserves!”

She paused

but Zeus who commands the storm clouds answered nothing. 610

The Father sat there, silent. It seemed an eternity . . .

But Thetis, clasping his knees, held on, clinging,
pressing her question once again: “Grant my prayer,
once and for all, Father, bow your head in assent!

Or deny me outright. What have *you* to fear?

So I may know, too well, just how cruelly

I am the most dishonored goddess of them all.”

Filled with anger

Zeus who marshals the storm clouds answered her at last:

“Disaster. You will drive me into war with Hera.

She will provoke me, she with her shrill abuse.

Even now in the face of all the immortal gods 620

she harries me perpetually, Hera charges *me*

that I always go to battle for the Trojans.

Away with you now. Hera might catch us here.

I will see to this. I will bring it all to pass.

Look, I will bow my head if that will satisfy you.

That, I remind you, that among the immortal gods

is the strongest, truest sign that I can give.

No word or work of mine—nothing can be revoked,

there is no treachery, nothing left unfinished

once I bow my head to say it shall be done.” 630

So he decreed. And Zeus the son of Cronus bowed
his craggy dark brows and the deathless locks came pouring
down from the thunderhead of the great immortal king
and giant shock waves spread through all Olympus.

So the two of them made their pact and parted.
Deep in the sea she drove from radiant Mount Olympus.
Zeus went back to his own halls, and all the gods

in full assembly rose from their seats at once
 to meet the Father striding toward them now. 640
 None dared remain at rest as Zeus advanced,
 they all sprang up to greet him face-to-face
 as he took his place before them on his throne.
 But Hera knew it all. She had seen how Thetis,
 the Old Man of the Sea's daughter, Thetis quick
 on her glistening feet was hatching plans with Zeus.
 And suddenly Hera taunted the Father, son of Cronus:
 "So, who of the gods this time, my treacherous one,
 was hatching plans with you?
 Always your pleasure, whenever my back is turned, 650
 to settle things in your grand clandestine way.
 You never deign, do you, freely and frankly,
 to share your plots with me—never, not a word!"

The father of men and gods replied sharply,
 "Hera—stop hoping to fathom all my thoughts.
 You will find them a trial, though you are my wife.
 Whatever is right for you to hear, no one, trust me,
 will know of it before you, neither god nor man.
 Whatever I choose to plan apart from all the gods—
 no more of your everlasting questions, probe and pry no more." 660

And Hera the Queen, her dark eyes wide, exclaimed,
 "Dread majesty, son of Cronus, what are you saying?
 Now surely I've never probed or pried in the past.
 Why, you can scheme to your heart's content
 without a qualm in the world for me. But now
 I have a terrible fear that she has won you over,
 Thetis, the Old Man of the Sea's daughter, Thetis
 with her glistening feet. I know it. Just at dawn
 she knelt down beside you and grasped your knees
 and I suspect you bowed your head in assent to her— 670
 you granted once and for all to exalt Achilles now
 and slaughter hordes of Achaeans pinned against their ships."

And Zeus who marshals the thunderheads returned,
 "Maddening one . . . you and your eternal suspicions—
 I can never escape you. Ah but tell me, Hera,
 just what can you *do* about all this? Nothing.
 Only estrange yourself from me a little more—
 and all the worse for you.
 If what you say is true, that must be my pleasure.
 Now go sit down. Be quiet now. Obey my orders, 680
 for fear the gods, however many Olympus holds,

are powerless to protect you when I come
to throttle you with my irresistible hands."

He subsided

but Hera the Queen, her eyes wider, was terrified.
She sat in silence. She wrenched her will to his.
And throughout the halls of Zeus the gods of heaven
quaked with fear. Hephaestus the Master Craftsman
rose up first to harangue them all, trying now
to bring his loving mother a little comfort,
the white-armed goddess Hera: "Oh disaster . . .
that's what it is, and it will be unbearable
if the two of you must come to blows this way,
flinging the gods in chaos just for mortal men.
No more joy for us in the sumptuous feast
when riot rules the day.

I urge you, mother—you know that I am right—
work back into his good graces, so the Father,
our beloved Father will never wheel on us again,
send our banquets crashing! The Olympian lord of lightning—
what if he would like to blast us from our seats?
He is far too strong. Go back to him, mother,
stroke the Father with soft, winning words—
at once the Olympian will turn kind to us again."

700

Pleading, springing up with a two-handled cup,
he reached it toward his loving mother's hands
with his own winning words: "Patience, mother!
Grieved as you are, bear up, or dear as you are,
I have to see you beaten right before my eyes.
I would be shattered—what could I do to save you?
It's hard to fight the Olympian strength for strength.
You remember the last time I rushed to your defense?
He seized my foot, he hurled me off the tremendous threshold
and all day long I dropped, I was dead weight and then,
when the sun went down, down I plunged on Lemnos,
little breath left in me. But the mortals there
soon nursed a fallen immortal back to life."

710

At that the white-armed goddess Hera smiled
and smiling, took the cup from her child's hands.
Then dipping sweet nectar up from the mixing bowl
he poured it round to all the immortals, left to right.
And uncontrollable laughter broke from the happy gods
as they watched the god of fire breathing hard
and bustling through the halls.

720

That hour then

and all day long till the sun went down they feasted
and no god's hunger lacked a share of the handsome banquet
or the gorgeous lyre Apollo struck or the Muses singing
voice to voice in choirs, their vibrant music rising.

At last, when the sun's fiery light had set,
each immortal went to rest in his own house,
the splendid high halls Hephaestus built for each
with all his craft and cunning, the famous crippled Smith.
And Olympian Zeus the lord of lightning went to his own bed
where he had always lain when welcome sleep came on him.
There he climbed and there he slept and by his side
lay Hera the Queen, the goddess of the golden throne.

730

BOOK TWO

The Great Gathering of Armies

Now the great array of gods and chariot-driving men
slept all night long, but the peaceful grip of sleep
could not hold Zeus, turning it over in his mind . . .
how to exalt Achilles?—how to slaughter
hordes of Achaeans pinned against their ships?
As his spirit churned, at last one plan seemed best:
he would send a murderous dream to Agamemnon.
Calling out to the vision, Zeus winged it on:
“Go, murderous Dream, to the fast Achaean ships
and once you reach Agamemnon's shelter rouse him,
order him, word-for-word, exactly as I command.
Tell Atrides to arm his long-haired Achaeans,
to attack at once, full force—
now he can take the broad streets of Troy.
The immortal gods who hold Olympus clash no more,
Hera's appeals have brought them round and all agree:
griefs are about to crush the men of Troy.”

10

At that command

the dream went winging off, and passing quickly
along the fast trim ships, made for the king
and found him soon, sound asleep in his tent
with refreshing godsent slumber drifted round him.
Hovering at his head the vision rose like Nestor,
Neleus' son, the chief Agamemnon honored most.
Inspired with Nestor's voice and sent by Zeus,

20

the dream cried out, "Still asleep, Agamemnon?
The son of Atreus, that skilled breaker of horses?
How can you sleep all night, a man weighed down with duties?
Your armies turning over their lives to your command—
responsibilities so heavy. Listen to me, quickly!
I bring you a message sent by Zeus, a world away
but he has you in his heart, he pities you now . . .
Zeus commands you to arm your long-haired Achaeans,
to attack at once, full force—
now you can take the broad streets of Troy!
The immortal gods who hold Olympus clash no more,
Hera's appeals have brought them round and all agree:
griefs from Zeus are about to crush the men of Troy!
But keep this message firmly in your mind.
Remember—let no loss of memory overcome you
when the sweet grip of slumber sets you free."

30

40

With that the dream departed, leaving him there,
his heart racing with hopes that would not come to pass.
He thought he would take the city of Priam then,
that very day, the fool. How could he know
what work the Father had in mind? The Father,
still bent on plaguing the Argives and Trojans both
with wounds and groans in the bloody press of battle.
But rousing himself from sleep, the divine voice
swirling round him, Atrides sat up, bolt awake,
pulled on a soft tunic, linen never worn,
and over it threw his flaring battle-cape,
under his smooth feet he fastened supple sandals,
across his shoulder slung his silver-studded sword.
Then he seized the royal scepter of his fathers—
its power can never die—and grasping it tightly
off he strode to the ships of Argives armed in bronze.

50

Now the goddess Dawn climbed up to Olympus heights,
declaring the light of day to Zeus and the deathless gods
as the king commanded heralds to cry out loud and clear
and muster the long-haired Achaeans to full assembly.
Their cries rang out. Battalions gathered quickly.

60

But first he called his ranking chiefs to council
beside the ship of Nestor, the warlord born in Pylos.
Summoning them together there Atrides set forth
his cunning, foolproof plan: "Hear me, friends—
a dream sent by the gods has come to me in sleep.
Down through the bracing godsent night it came
like good Nestor in features, height and build,

the old king himself, and hovering at my head
 the dream called me on: 'Still asleep, Agamemnon?
 The son of Atreus, that skilled breaker of horses?
 How can you sleep all night, a man weighed down with duties?
 Your armies turning over their lives to your command—
 responsibilities so heavy. Listen to me, quickly!
 I bring you a message sent by Zeus, a world away
 but he has you in his heart, he pities you now . . .
 Zeus commands you to arm your long-haired Achaeans,
 to attack at once, full force—
 now you can take the broad streets of Troy!
 The immortal gods who hold Olympus clash no more,
 Hera's appeals have brought them round and all agree:
 griefs from Zeus are about to crush the men of Troy!
 But keep this message firmly in your mind.'

70

80

With that

the dream went winging off and soothing sleep released me.
 Come—see if we can arm the Achaeans for assault.
 But first, according to time-honored custom,
 I will test the men with a challenge, tell them all
 to crowd the oarlocks, cut and run in their ships.
 But you take up your battle-stations at every point,
 command them, hold them back."

90

So much for his plan.

Agamemnon took his seat and Nestor rose among them.
 Noble Nestor the king of Pylos' sandy harbor
 spoke and urged them on with all good will:
 "Friends, lords of the Argives, O my captains!
 If any other Achaean had told us of this dream
 we'd call it false and turn our backs upon it.
 But look, the man who saw it has every claim
 to be the best, the bravest Achaean we can field.
 Come—see if we can arm the Achaeans for assault."

And out he marched, leading the way from council.
 The rest sprang to their feet, the sceptered kings
 obeyed the great field marshal. Rank and file
 streamed behind and rushed like swarms of bees
 pouring out of a rocky hollow, burst on endless burst,
 bunched in clusters seething over the first spring blooms,
 dark hordes swirling into the air, this way, that way—
 so the many armed platoons from the ships and tents
 came marching on, close-file, along the deep wide beach
 to crowd the meeting grounds, and Rumor, Zeus's crier,
 like wildfire blazing among them, whipped them on.
 The troops assembled. The meeting grounds shook.
 The earth groaned and rumbled under the huge weight

100

110

as soldiers took positions—the whole place in uproar.
 Nine heralds shouted out, trying to keep some order,
 “Quiet, battalions, silence! Hear your royal kings!”
 The men were forced to their seats, marshaled into ranks,
 the shouting died away . . . silence.

King Agamemnon

rose to his feet, raising high in hand the scepter
 Hephaestus made with all his strength and skill.
 Hephaestus gave it to Cronus’ son, Father Zeus,
 and Zeus gave it to Hermes, the giant-killing Guide
 and Hermes gave it to Pelops, that fine charioteer,
 Pelops gave it to Atreus, marshal of fighting men,
 who died and passed it on to Thyestes rich in flocks
 and he in turn bestowed it on Agamemnon, to bear on high
 as he ruled his many islands and lorded mainland Argos.

120

Now, leaning his weight upon that kingly scepter,
 Atreides declared his will to all Achaea’s armies:
 “Friends—fighting Danaans, aides-in-arms of Ares!
 Cronus’ son has trapped me in madness, blinding ruin—
 Zeus is a harsh, cruel god. He vowed to me long ago,
 he bowed his head that I should never embark for home
 till I had brought the walls of Ilium crashing down.

130

But now, I see, he only plotted brutal treachery:
 now he commands me back to Argos in disgrace,
 whole regiments of my men destroyed in battle.
 So it must please his overweening heart, who knows?
 Father Zeus has lopped the crowns of a thousand cities,
 true, and Zeus will lop still more—his power is too great.

What humiliation! Even for generations still to come,
 to learn that Achaean armies so strong, so vast,
 fought a futile war . . . We are still fighting it,
 no end in sight, and battling forces we outnumber—
 by far. Say that Trojans and Argives both agreed
 to swear a truce, to seal their oaths in blood,
 and opposing sides were tallied out in full:

140

count one by one the Trojans who live in Troy
 but count our Achaeans out by ten-man squads
 and each squad pick a Trojan to pour its wine—
 many Achaean tens would lack their steward then!

150

That’s how far we outnumber them, I’d say—Achaeans
 to Trojans—the men who hail from Troy at least.
 But they have allies called from countless cities,
 fighters brandishing spears who block my way,
 who throw me far off course,
 thwarting my will to plunder Ilium’s rugged walls.
 And now nine years of almighty Zeus have marched by,
 our ship timbers rot and the cables snap and fray

and across the sea our wives and helpless children
 wait in the halls, wait for our return . . . And we?
 Our work drags on, unfinished as always, hopeless—
 the labor of war that brought us here to Troy.
 So come, follow my orders. All obey me now.
 Cut and run! Sail home to the fatherland we love!
 We'll never take the broad streets of Troy."

160

Testing his men

but he only made the spirit race inside their chests,
 all the rank and file who'd never heard his plan.
 And the whole assembly surged like big waves at sea,
 the Icarian Sea when East and South Winds drive it on,
 blasting down in force from the clouds of Father Zeus,
 or when the West Wind shakes the deep standing grain
 with hurricane gusts that flatten down the stalks—
 so the massed assembly of troops was shaken now.
 They cried in alarm and charged toward the ships
 and the dust went whirling up from under rushing feet
 as the men jostled back and forth, shouting orders—
 "Grapple the ships! Drag them down to the bright sea!
 Clean out the launching-channels!" Shrill shouts
 hitting the heavens, fighters racing for home,
 knocking the blocks out underneath the hulls.

170

180

And now they might have won their journey home,
 the men of Argos fighting the will of fate, yes,
 if Hera had not alerted Athena: "Inconceivable!
 Child of Zeus whose battle-shield is thunder,
 tireless one, Athena—what, is *this* the way?
 All the Argives flying home to their fatherland,
 sailing over the sea's broad back? Leaving Priam
 and all the men of Troy a trophy to glory over,
Helen of Argos, Helen for whom so many Argives
 lost their lives in Troy, far from native land.
 Go, range the ranks of Achaeans armed in bronze.
 With your winning words hold back each man you find—
 don't let them haul their rolling ships to sea!"

190

The bright-eyed goddess Pallas lost no time.
 Down she flashed from the peaks of Mount Olympus,
 quickly reached the ships and found Odysseus first,
 a mastermind like Zeus, still standing fast.
 He had not laid a hand on his black benched hull,
 such anguish racked his heart and fighting spirit.
 Now close beside him the bright-eyed goddess stood
 and urged him on: "Royal son of Laertes, Odysseus,
 great tactician—what, is *this* the way?"

200

All you Argives flying home to your fatherland,
tumbling into your oar-swept ships? Leaving Priam
and all the men of Troy a trophy to glory over,
Helen of Argos, Helen for whom so many Argives
lost their lives in Troy, far from native land!
No, don't give up now. Range the Achaean ranks,
with your winning words hold back each man you find—
don't let them haul their rolling ships to sea!"

210

He knew the goddess' voice—he went on the run,
flinging off his cape as Eurybates picked it up,
the herald of Ithaca always at his side.
Coming face-to-face with Atrides Agamemnon,
he relieved him of his fathers' royal scepter—
its power can never die—and grasping it tightly
off he strode to the ships of Argives armed in bronze.

Whenever Odysseus met some man of rank, a king,
he'd halt and hold him back with winning words:
"My *friend*—it's wrong to threaten you like a coward,
but you stand fast, you keep your men in check!
It's too soon to see Agamemnon's purpose clearly.
Now he's only testing us, soon he'll bear down hard.
Didn't we all hear his plan in secret council?
God forbid his anger destroy the army he commands.
The rage of kings is strong, they're nursed by the gods,
their honor comes from Zeus—
they're dear to Zeus, the god who rules the world."

220

When he caught some common soldier shouting out,
he'd beat him with the scepter, dress him down:
"You *fool*—sit still! Obey the commands of others,
your superiors—you, you deserter, rank coward,
you count for nothing, neither in war nor council.
How can all Achaeans be masters here in Troy?
Too many kings can ruin an army—mob rule!
Let there be one commander, one master only,
endowed by the son of crooked-minded Cronus
with kingly scepter and royal rights of custom:
whatever one man needs to lead his people well."

230

So he ranged the ranks, commanding men to order—
and back again they surged from ships and shelters,
back to the meeting grounds with a deep pounding din,
thundering out as battle lines of breakers crash and drag
along some endless beach, and the rough sea roars.

240

The armies took their seats, marshaled into ranks.
 But one man, Thersites, still railed on, nonstop.
 His head was full of obscenities, teeming with rant,
 all for no good reason, insubordinate, baiting the kings—
 anything to provoke some laughter from the troops.
 Here was the ugliest man who ever came to Troy. 250
 Bandy-legged he was, with one foot clubbed,
 both shoulders humped together, curving over
 his caved-in chest, and bobbing above them
 his skull warped to a point,
 sprouting clumps of scraggly, woolly hair.
 Achilles despised him most, Odysseus too—
 he was always abusing both chiefs, but now
 he went for majestic Agamemnon, hollering out,
 taunting the king with strings of cutting insults.
 The Achaeans were furious with him, deeply offended. 260
 But he kept shouting at Agamemnon, spewing his abuse:
 “Still moaning and groaning, mighty Atrides—why now?
 What are you panting after now? Your shelters packed
 with the lion’s share of bronze, plenty of women too,
 crowding your lodges. Best of the lot, the beauties
 we hand you first, whenever we take some stronghold.
 Or still more gold you’re wanting? More ransom a son
 of the stallion-breaking Trojans might just fetch from Troy?—
 though I or another hero drags him back in chains . . .
 Or a young woman, is it?—to spread and couple, 270
 to bed down for yourself apart from all the troops?
 How shameful for you, the high and mighty commander,
 to lead the sons of Achaea into bloody slaughter!
Sons? No, my soft friends, wretched excuses—
 women, not men of Achaea! Home we go in our ships!
 Abandon him here in Troy to wallow in all his prizes—
 he’ll see if the likes of us have propped him up or not.
 Look—now it’s Achilles, a greater man he disgraces,
 seizes and keeps his prize, tears her away himself.
 But no gall in Achilles. Achilles lets it go. 280
 If not, Atrides, that outrage would have been your last!”

So Thersites taunted the famous field marshal.
 But Odysseus stepped in quickly, faced him down
 with a dark glance and threats to break his nerve:
 “What a flood of abuse, Thersites! Even for you,
 fluent and flowing as you are. Keep quiet.
 Who are *you* to wrangle with kings, you alone?
 No one, I say—no one alive less soldierly than you,
 none in the ranks that came to Troy with Agamemnon.

So stop your babbling, mouthing the names of kings, 290
 flinging indecencies in their teeth, your eyes
 peeled for a chance to cut and run for home.
 We can have no idea, no clear idea at all
 how the long campaign will end . . .
 whether Achaea's sons will make it home unharmed
 or slink back in disgrace.

But there you sit,
 hurling abuse at the son of Atreus, Agamemnon,
 marshal of armies, simply because our fighters
 give Atrides the lion's share of all our plunder.
 You and your ranting slander—you're the outrage. 300
 I tell you this, so help me it's the truth:
 if I catch you again, blithering on this way,
 let Odysseus' head be wrenched off his shoulders,
 never again call me the father of Telemachus
 if I don't grab you, strip the clothing off you,
 cloak, tunic and rags that wrap your private parts,
 and whip you howling naked back to the fast ships,
 out of the armies' muster—whip you like a cur!"

And he cracked the scepter across his back and shoulders.
 The rascal doubled over, tears streaking his face 310
 and a bloody welt bulged up between his blades,
 under the stroke of the golden scepter's studs.
 He squatted low, cringing, stunned with pain,
 blinking like some idiot . . .
 rubbing his tears off dumbly with a fist.
 Their morale was low but the men laughed now,
 good hearty laughter breaking over Thersites' head—
 glancing at neighbors they would shout, "A terrific stroke!
 A thousand terrific strokes he's carried off—Odysseus,
 taking the lead in tactics, mapping battle-plans. 320
 But here's the best thing yet he's done for the men—
 he's put a stop to this babbling, foulmouthed fool!
 Never again, I'd say, will our gallant comrade
 risk his skin to attack the kings with insults."

So the soldiers bantered but not Odysseus.
 The raider of cities stood there, scepter in hand,
 and close beside him the great gray-eyed Athena
 rose like a herald, ordering men to silence. All,
 from the first to lowest ranks of Achaea's troops,
 should hear his words and mark his counsel well. 330
 For the good of all he urged them: "Agamemnon!
 Now, my king, the Achaeans are bent on making you

a disgrace in the eyes of every man alive. Yes,
 they fail to fulfill their promise sworn that day
 they sailed here from the stallion-land of Argos:
 that not until you had razed the rugged walls of Troy
 would they sail home again. But look at them now,
 like green, defenseless boys or widowed women
 whimpering to each other, wailing to journey back.
 True, they've labored long—they're desperate for home.
 Any fighter, cut off from his wife for one month,
 would chafe at the benches, moaning in his ship,
 pinned down by gales and heavy, raging seas.
 A month—but look at *us*.

340

This is the ninth year come round, the ninth
 we've hung on here. Who could blame the Achaeans
 for chafing, bridling beside the beaked ships?
 Ah but still—what a humiliation it would be
 to hold out so long, then sail home empty-handed.
 Courage, my friends, hold out a little longer.
 Till we see if Calchas divined the truth or not.
 We all recall that moment—who could forget it?
 We were all witnesses then. All, at least,
 the deadly spirits have not dragged away . . .

350

Why,

it seems like only yesterday or the day before
 when our vast armada gathered, moored at Aulis,
 freighted with slaughter bound for Priam's Troy.
 We were all busy then, milling round a spring
 and offering victims up on the holy altars,
 full sacrifice to the gods to guarantee success,
 under a spreading plane tree where the water splashed,
 glittering in the sun—when a great omen appeared.
 A snake, and his back streaked red with blood,
 a thing of terror! Olympian Zeus himself
 had launched him into the clean light of day . . .
 He slid from under the altar, glided up the tree
 and there the brood of a sparrow, helpless young ones,
 teetered high on the topmost branch-tips, cowering
 under the leaves there, eight they were all told
 and the mother made the ninth, she'd borne them all—
 chirping to break the heart but the snake gulped them down
 and the mother cried out for her babies, fluttering over him . . .
 he coiled, struck, fanging her wing—a high thin shriek!
 But once he'd swallowed down the sparrow with her brood,
 the son of crooked Cronus who sent the serpent forth
 turned him into a sign, a monument clear to see—
 Zeus struck him to stone! And we stood by,

360

370

amazed that such a marvel came to light.

So then,

when those terrible, monstrous omens burst in
on the victims we were offering to the gods,

380

Calchas swiftly revealed the will of Zeus:

‘Why struck dumb now, my long-haired Achaeans?

Zeus who rules the world has shown us an awesome sign,

an event long in the future, late to come to birth

but the fame of that great work will never die.

As the snake devoured the sparrow with her brood,

eight and the mother made the ninth, she’d borne them all,

so we will fight in Troy that many years and then,

then in the tenth we’ll take her broad streets.’

So that day the prophet revealed the future—

390

and now, look, by god, it all comes to pass!

Up with you, all you Argives geared for combat,

stand your ground, right here,

until we take the mighty walls of Priam!”

He fired them so

the armies roared and the ships resounded round them,

shattering echoes ringing from their shouts

as Argives cried assent to King Odysseus’ words.

And Nestor the noble horseman spurred them more:

“What disgrace! Look at you, carrying on

in the armies’ muster just like boys—fools!

400

Not a thought in your heads for works of battle.

What becomes of them now, the pacts and oaths we swore?

Into the flames with councils, all the plans of men,

the vows sealed with the strong, unmixed wine,

the firm clasp of the right hand we trusted!

We battle on in words, as always, mere words,

and what’s the cure? We cannot find a thing.

No matter how many years we wrangle here.

Agamemnon—

never swerve, hold to your first plan of action,

lead your armies headlong into war!

410

The rest of them? Let them rot, the one or two

who hatch their plans apart from all the troops—

what good can they win from that? Nothing at all.

Why, they’d scuttle home before they can even learn

if the vows of Zeus with his dark cloudy shield

are false or not. Zeus the son of almighty Cronus,

I remind you, bowed his head that day we boarded ship,

all the Argives laden with blood and death for Troy—

his lightning bolts on the right, good omens blazing forth.

So now let no man hurry to sail for home, not yet . . .

420

not till he beds down with a faithful Trojan wife,
payment in full for the groans and shocks of war
we have all borne for Helen.

But any soldier
wild with desire to reach his home at once—
just let him lay a hand on his black benched ship
and right in front of the rest he'll reach his death!
But you, my King, be on your guard yourself. Come,
listen well to another man. Here's some advice,
not to be tossed aside, and I will tell it clearly.
Range your men by tribes, even by clans, Agamemnon,
so clan fights by the side of clan, tribe by tribe.
Fight this way, if the Argives still obey you,
then you can see which captain is a coward,
which contingent too, and which is loyal, brave,
since they will fight in separate formations of their own.
Then, what's more, if you fail to sack the city,
you will know if the will of god's to blame
or the cowardice of your men—inept in battle."

430

And King Agamemnon took his lead, saluting:
"Again, old man, you outfight the Argives in debate!
Father Zeus, Athena, Apollo, if only I had ten men
like Nestor to plan with me among Achaea's armies—
then we could topple Priam's citadel in a day,
throttle it in our hands and gut Troy to nothing.
But Cronus' son, Zeus with his shield of storm
insists on embroiling me in painful struggles,
futile wars of words . . .

440

Imagine—I and Achilles, wrangling over a girl,
battling man-to-man. And I, I was the first
to let my anger flare. Ah if the two of us
could ever think as one, Troy could delay
her day of death no longer, not one moment.
Go now, take your meal—the sooner to bring on war.
Quickly—let each fighter sharpen his spear well,
balance his shield well, feed his horses well
with plenty of grain to build their racing speed—
each man look well to his chariot's running order,
nerve himself for combat now, so all day long
we can last out the grueling duels of Ares!

450

No breathing space, no letup, not a moment, not
till the night comes on to part the fighters' fury!
Now sweat will soak the shield-strap round your chest,
your fist gripping the spear will ache with tensing,
now the lather will drench your war-team's flanks,
hauling your sturdy chariot.

460

But any man I catch,
 trying to skulk behind his long beaked ships,
 hanging back from battle—he is finished.
 No way for *him* to escape the dogs and birds!”

So he commanded

and the armies gave a deep resounding roar like waves
 crashing against a cliff when the South Wind whips it, 470

bearing down, some craggy headland jutting out to sea—
 the waves will never leave it in peace, thrashed by gales
 that hit from every quarter, breakers left and right.

The troops sprang up, scattered back to the ships,
 lit fires beside their tents and took their meal.

Each sacrificed to one or another deathless god,
 each man praying to flee death and the grind of war.

But the lord of men Agamemnon sacrificed a fat rich ox,
 five years old, to the son of mighty Cronus, Zeus,

and called the chiefs of all the Argive forces: 480

Nestor first and foremost, then King Idomeneus,
 the Great and Little Ajax, Tydeus' son Diomedes
 and Odysseus sixth, a mastermind like Zeus.

The lord of the war cry Menelaus came uncalled,
 he knew at heart what weighed his brother down.

They stood in a ring around the ox, took up barley
 and then, rising among them, King Agamemnon

raised his voice in prayer: “Zeus, Zeus,
 god of greatness, god of glory, lord god

of the dark clouds who lives in the bright sky, 490

don't let the sun go down or the night descend on us!

Not till I hurl the smoke-black halls of Priam headlong—
 torch his gates to blazing rubble—rip the tunic of Hector

and slash his heroic chest to ribbons with my bronze—
 and a ruck of comrades round him, groveling facedown,

gnaw their own earth!”

And so Agamemnon prayed

but the son of Cronus would not bring his prayer to pass,
 not yet . . . the Father accepted the sacrifices, true,

but doubled the weight of thankless, ruthless war.

Once the men had prayed and flung the barley, 500

first they lifted back the heads of the victims,

slit their throats, skinned them and carved away

the meat from the thighbones and wrapped them in fat,
 a double fold sliced clean and topped with strips of flesh.

And they burned these on a cleft stick, peeled and dry,

spitted the vitals, held them over Hephaestus' flames

and once they'd charred the thighs and tasted the organs

they cut the rest into pieces, pierced them with spits,

roasted them to a turn and pulled them off the fire.

The work done, the feast laid out, they ate well
 and no man's hunger lacked a share of the banquet.
 When they had put aside desire for food and drink,
 Nestor the noble old horseman spoke out first:
 "Marshal Atrides, lord of men Agamemnon,
 no more trading speeches now. No more delay,
 putting off the work the god puts in our hands.
 Come, let the heralds cry out to all contingents,
 full battle-armor, muster the men along the ships.
 Now down we go, united—review them as we pass.
 Down through the vast encampment of Achaea,
 the faster to rouse the slashing god of war!"

510

520

Agamemnon the lord of men did not resist.
 He commanded heralds to cry out loud and clear
 and summon the long-haired Achaean troops to battle.
 Their cries rang out. The battalions gathered quickly.
 The warlords dear to the gods and flanking Agamemnon
 strode on ahead, marshaling men-at-arms in files,
 and down their ranks the fiery-eyed Athena bore
 her awesome shield of storm, ageless, deathless—
 a hundred golden tassels, all of them braided tight
 and each worth a hundred oxen, float along the front.
 Her shield of lightning dazzling, swirling around her,
 headlong on Athena swept through the Argive armies,
 driving soldiers harder, lashing the fighting-fury
 in each Achaean's heart—no stopping them now,
 mad for war and struggle. Now, suddenly,
 battle thrilled them more than the journey home,
 than sailing hollow ships to their dear native land.

530

As ravening fire rips through big stands of timber
 high on a mountain ridge and the blaze flares miles away,
 so from the marching troops the blaze of bronze armor,
 splendid and superhuman, flared across the earth,
 flashing into the air to hit the skies.

540

Armies gathering now
 as the huge flocks on flocks of winging birds; geese or cranes
 or swans with their long lancing necks—circling Asian marshes
 round the Cayster outflow, wheeling in all directions,
 glorying in their wings—keep on landing, advancing,
 wave on shrieking wave and the tidal flats resound.
 So tribe on tribe, pouring out of the ships and shelters,
 marched across the Scamander plain and the earth shook,
 tremendous thunder from under trampling men and horses
 drawing into position down the Scamander meadow flats

550

breaking into flower—men by the thousands, numberless
as the leaves and spears that flower forth in spring.

The armies massing . . . crowding thick-and-fast
as the swarms of flies seething over the shepherds' stalls
in the first spring days when the buckets flood with milk—
so many long-haired Achaeans swarmed across the plain
to confront the Trojans, fired to smash their lines.

The armies grouping now—as seasoned goatherds
split their wide-ranging flocks into packs with ease
when herds have mixed together down the pasture:
so the captains formed their tight platoons,
detaching right and left, moving up for action—
and there in the midst strode powerful Agamemnon,
eyes and head like Zeus who loves the lightning,
great in the girth like Ares, god of battles,
broad through the chest like sea lord Poseidon.
Like a bull rising head and shoulders over the herds,
a royal bull rearing over his flocks of driven cattle—
so imposing was Atreus' son, so Zeus made him that day,
towering over fighters, looming over armies.

Sing to me now, you Muses who hold the halls of Olympus!
You are goddesses, you are everywhere, you know all things—
all we hear is the distant ring of glory, we know nothing—
who were the captains of Achaea? Who were the kings?
The mass of troops I could never tally, never name,
not even if I had ten tongues and ten mouths,
a tireless voice and the heart inside me bronze,
never unless you Muses of Olympus, daughter of Zeus
whose shield is rolling thunder, sing, sing in memory
all who gathered under Troy. Now I can only tell
the lords of the ships, the ships in all their numbers!

First came the Boeotian units led by Leitus and Peneleos:
Arcesilaus and Prothoënor and Clonius shared command
of the armed men who lived in Hyria, rocky Aulis,
Schoenus, Scolus and Eteonus spurred with hills,
Thespia and Graea, the dancing rings of Mycalessus,
men who lived round Harma, Ilesion and Erythrae
and those who settled Eleon, Hyle and Peteon,
Ocalea, Medeon's fortress walled and strong,
Copae, Eutresis and Thisbe thronged with doves,
fighters from Coronea, Haliartus deep in meadows,
and the men who held Plataea and lived in Glisas,

men who held the rough-hewn gates of Lower Thebes,
 Onchestus the holy, Poseidon's sun-filled grove,
 men from the town of Arne green with vineyards,
 Midea and sacred Nisa, Anthedon-on-the-marches.
 Fifty ships came freighted with these contingents,
 one hundred and twenty young Boeotians manning each.

600

Then men who lived in Aspledon, Orchomenos of the Minyans,
 fighters led by Ascalaphus and Ialmenus, sons of Ares
 whom Astyoche bore in Actor son of Azeus' halls
 when the shy young girl, climbing into the upper rooms,
 made love with the god of war in secret, shared his strength.
 In her two sons' command sailed thirty long curved ships.

Then Schedius and Epistrophus led the men of Phocis—
 two sons of Iphitus, that great heart, Naubolus' son—
 the men who held Cyparissus and Pytho's high crags,
 the hallowed earth of Crisa, Daulis and Panopeus,
 men who dwelled round Anemoria, round Hyampolis,
 men who lived along the Cephissus' glinting waters,
 men who held Lilaea close to the river's wellsprings.
 Laden with all their ranks came forty long black ships
 and Phocian captains ranged them column by column,
 manning stations along the Boeotians' left flank.

610

Next the Locrians led by racing Ajax, son of Oileus,
 Little Ajax—a far cry from the size of Telamonian Ajax—
 a smaller man but trim in his skintight linen corslet,
 he outthrew all Hellenes, all Achaeans with his spear.
 He led the men who lived in Opois, Cynus, Calliarus,
 Bessa and Scarphe, the delightful town of Augeae,
 Tarphe and Thronion down the Boagrius River.
 In Oilean Ajax' charge came forty long black ships,
 Locrians living across the straits from sacrosanct Euboea.

620

And the men who held Euboea, Abantes breathing fury,
 Chalcis and Eretria, Histiaea covered with vineyards,
 Cerinthus along the shore and Dion's hilltop streets,
 the men who held Carystus and men who settled Styra.
 Elephenor, comrade of Ares, led the whole contingent,
 Chalcodon's son, a lord of the fierce Abantes.
 The sprinting Abantes followed hard at his heels,
 their forelocks cropped, hair grown long at the back,
 troops nerved to lunge with their tough ashen spears
 and slash the enemies' breastplates round their chests.
 In Elephenor's command sailed forty long black ships.

630

Next the men who held the strong-built city of Athens,
 realm of high-hearted Erechtheus. Zeus's daughter Athena
 tended him once the grain-giving fields had borne him,
 long ago, and then she settled the king in Athens,
 in her own rich shrine, where sons of Athens worship him
 with bulls and goats as the years wheel round in season.
 Athenians all, and Peteos' son Menestheus led them on,
 and no one born on the earth could match that man
 in arraying teams of horse and shielded fighters—
 Nestor his only rival, thanks to Nestor's age.
 And in his command sailed fifty long black ships.

640

Out of Salamis Great Telamonian Ajax led twelve ships
 drawn up where Athenian forces formed their line of battle.

Then men of Argos and Tiryns with her tremendous walls
 and Hermione and Asine commanding the deep wide gulf,
 Troezen, Eionae and Epidaurus green with vines
 and Achaea's warrior sons who held Aegina and Mases—
 Diomedes lord of the war cry led their crack contingents
 flanked by Sthenelus, far-famed Capaneus' favorite son.
 Third in the vanguard marched Euryalus strong as a god,
 son of King Mecisteus son of Talaus, but over them all,
 with cries to marshal men Diomedes led the whole force
 and his Argives sailed in eighty long black ships.

650

Next the men who held Mycenae's huge walled citadel,
 Corinth in all her wealth and sturdy, strong Cleonae,
 men of Orniae, lovely Araethyrea and Sicyon,
 Adrastus' domain before he ruled Mycenae,
 men of Hyperesia, Gonoëssa perched on hills,
 men who held Pellene and those who circled Aegion,
 men of the coastal strip and Helice's broad headland.
 They came in a hundred ships and Agamemnon led them on,
 Atreus' royal son, and marching in his companies
 came the most and bravest fighting men by far.
 And there in the midst, armed in gleaming bronze,
 in all his glory, he towered high over all his fighters—
 he was the greatest warlord, he led by far the largest army.

660

670

Next those who held Lacedaemon's hollows deep with gorges,
 Pharis, Sparta and Messe, crowded haunt of the wild doves,
 men who lived in Brysiae and Augeae's gracious country,
 men who held Amyclae, Helos the seaboard fortress,
 men who settled Laas and lived near Oetylus:
 Agamemnon's brother, Menelaus lord of the war cry

led their sixty ships, armed them apart, downshore,
and amidst their ranks he marched, ablaze with valor,
priming men for attack. And his own heart blazed the most
to avenge the groans and shocks of war they'd borne for Helen.

680

Next the men who lived in Pylos and handsome Arene,
Thryon, the Alpheus ford and finely-masoned Aepy,
men who lived in Cyparisseis and Amphigenia,
Pteleos, Helos and Dorion where the Muses met
the Thracian Thamyris, stopped the minstrel's song.
From Oechalia he came, from Oechalia's King Eurytus,
boasting to high heaven that he could outsing the very Muses,
the daughters of Zeus whose shield resounds with thunder.
They were enraged, they maimed him, they ripped away
his voice, the rousing immortal wonder of his song
and wiped all arts of harping from his mind.
Nestor the noble old horseman led those troops
in ninety sweeping ships lined up along the shore.

690

And those who held Arcadia under Cyllene's peak,
near Aepytus' ancient tomb where men fight hand-to-hand,
men who lived in Pheneos and Orchomenos rife with sheep,
Stratia, Rhipse and Enispe whipped by the sudden winds,
men who settled Tegea, Mantinea's inviting country,
men who held Stymphalus, men who ruled Parrhasia—
the son of Ancaeus led them, powerful Agapenor
with sixty ships in all, and aboard each vessel
crowded full Arcadian companies skilled in war.
Agamemnon himself, the lord of men had given them
those well-benched ships to plow the wine-dark sea,
since works of the sea meant nothing to those landmen.

700

Then the men who lived in Buprasion, brilliant Elis,
all the realm as far as Hyrmine and Myrsinus, frontier towns
and Olenian Rock and Alesion bound within their borders.
Four warlords led their ranks, ten-ship flotillas each,
and filling the decks came bands of Epean fighters,
two companies under Thalpius and Amphimachus, sons
of the line of Actor, one of Eurytus, one of Cteatus.
Strong Dioreas the son of Amarynceus led the third
and the princely Polyxenus led the fourth,
the son of King Agasthenes, Augeas' noble stock.

710

Then ocean men from Dulichion and the Holy Islands,
the Echinades rising over the sea across from Elis—
Meges a match for Ares led their troops to war,
a son of the rider Phyleus dear to Zeus who once,

720

enraged at his father, fled and settled Dulichion.
In his son's command sailed forty long black ships.

Next Odysseus led his Cephallonian companies,
gallant-hearted fighters, the island men of Ithaca,
of Mount Neriton's leafy ridges shimmering in the wind,
and men who lived in Crocylia and rugged Aegilips,
men who held Zacynthus and men who dwelled near Samos
and mainland men who grazed their flocks across the channel.
That mastermind like Zeus, Odysseus led those fighters on.
In his command sailed twelve ships, prows flashing crimson.

730

And Thoas son of Andraemon led Aetolia's units,
soldiers who lived in Pleuron, Pylene and Olenus,
Chalcis along the shore and Calydon's rocky heights
where the sons of wellborn Oeneus were no more
and the king himself was dead
and Meleager with his golden hair was gone.
So the rule of all Aetolian men had passed to Thoas.
In Thoas' command sailed forty long black ships.

And the great spearman Idomeneus led his Cretans,
the men who held Cnossos and Gortyn ringed in walls,
Lyctos, Miletus, Lycastus' bright chalk bluffs,
Phaestos and Rhytion, cities a joy to live in—
the men who peopled Crete, a hundred cities strong.
The renowned spearman Idomeneus led them all in force
with Meriones who butchered men like the god of war himself.
And in their command sailed eighty long black ships.

740

And Heracles' son Tlepolemus tall and staunch
led nine ships of the proud Rhodians out of Rhodes,
the men who lived on Rhodes in three island divisions,
Lindos and Ialysus and Camirus' white escarpment,
armies led by the famous spearman Tlepolemus
whom Astyochea bore to Heracles filled with power.
He swept her up from Ephyra, from the Selleis River
after he'd ravaged many towns of brave young warlords
bred by the gods. But soon as his son Tlepolemus
came of age in Heracles' well-built palace walls
the youngster abruptly killed his father's uncle—
the good soldier Licymnius, already up in years—
and quickly fitting ships, gathering partisans,
he fled across the sea with threats of the sons
and the sons' sons of Heracles breaking at his back.
But he reached Rhodes at last, a wanderer rocked by storms,
and there they settled in three divisions, all by tribes,

750

760

loved by Zeus himself the king of gods and mortals
showering wondrous gold on all their heads.

Nireus led his three trim ships from Syme,
Nireus the son of Aglaea and King Charopus,
Nireus the handsomest man who ever came to Troy,
of all the Achaeans after Peleus' fearless son.
But he was a lightweight, trailed by a tiny band.

770

And men who held Nisyros, Casus and Crapathus,
Cos, Eurypylus' town, and the islands called Calydnæ—
combat troops, and Antiphus and Phidippus led them on,
the two sons of the warlord Thessalus, Heracles' son.
In their command sailed thirty long curved ships.

And now, Muse,

sing all those fighting men who lived in Pelasgian Argos,
the big contingents out of Alus and Alope and Trachis,
men of Phthia and Hellas where the women are a wonder,
all the fighters called Achaeans, Hellenes and Myrmidons
ranked in fifty ships, and Achilles was their leader.
But they had no lust for the grind of battle now—
where was the man who marched their lines to war?
The brilliant runner Achilles lay among his ships,
raging over Briseis, the girl with lustrous hair,
the prize he seized from Lyrnessus—
after he had fought to exhaustion at Lyrnessus,
storming the heights, and breached the walls of Thebes
and toppled the vaunting spearmen Epistrophus and Mynes,
sons of King Euenus, Selepius' son. All for Briseis
his heart was breaking now . . . Achilles lay there now
but he would soon rise up in all his power.

780

790

Then men of Phylace, Pyrasus banked in flowers,
Demeter's closed and holy grove and Iton mother of flocks,
Antron along the shore and Pteleos deep in meadows.
The veteran Protesilaus had led those troops
while he still lived, but now for many years
the arms of the black earth had held him fast
and his wife was left behind, alone in Phylace,
both cheeks torn in grief, their house half-built.
Just as he vaulted off his ship a Dardan killed him,
first by far of the Argives slaughtered on the beaches.
But not even then were his men without a captain,
yearn as they did for their lost leader. No,
Podarces a fresh campaigner ranged their units—
a son of Iphiclus son of Phylacus rich in flocks—

800

Podarces, gallant Protesilaus' blood brother,
younger-born, but the older man proved braver too,
an iron man of war. Yet not for a moment did his army
lack a leader, yearn as they did for the braver dead.
Under Podarces sailed their forty long black ships.

810

And the men who lived in Pherae fronting Lake Boebeis,
in Boebe and Glaphyrae and Iolcos' sturdy ramparts:
their eleven ships were led by Admetus' favored son,
Eumelus, born to Admetus by Alcestis, queen of women,
the most radiant daughter Pelias ever fathered.

Then men who lived in Methone and Thaumacia,
men who held Meliboea and rugged ridged Olizon:
Philoctetes the master archer had led them on
in seven ships with fifty oarsmen aboard each,
superbly skilled with the bow in lethal combat.
But their captain lay on an island, racked with pain,
on Lemnos' holy shores where the armies had marooned him,
agonized by his wound, the bite of a deadly water-viper.
There he writhed in pain but soon, encamped by the ships,
the Argives would recall Philoctetes, their great king.
But not even then were his men without a captain,
yearn as they did for their lost leader. No,
Medon formed them up, Oileus' bastard son
whom Rhene bore to Oileus, grim raider of cities.

820

830

And men who settled Tricca, rocky Ithome terraced high
and men who held Oechalia, Oechalian Eurytus' city:
the two sons of Asclepius led their units now,
both skilled healers, Podalirius and Machaon.
In their command sailed forty curved black ships.

And men who held Ormenion and the Hyperian Spring,
men who held Asterion, Titanos' chalk-white cliffs:
Eurypylus marched them on, Euaemon's shining son.
In his command sailed forty long black ships.

And the men who settled Argissa and Gyrtone,
Orthe, Elone, the gleaming citadel Oloosson:
Polypoetes braced for battle led them on,
the son of Pirithous, son of deathless Zeus.
Famous Hippodamia bore the warrior to Pirithous
that day he wreaked revenge on the shaggy Centaurs,
routed them out of Pelion, drove them to the Aethices.
Polypoetes was not alone, Leonteus shared the helm,

840

companion of Ares, Caeneus' grandson, proud Coronus' son.
And in his command sailed forty long black ships.

And Guneus out of Cyphus led on two and twenty ships
and in his platoons came Enienes and battle-trying Peraebians
who pitched homes in the teeth of Dodona's bitter winters,
who held the tilled acres along the lovely Titaëssus
that runs her pure crystal currents into Peneus—
never mixed with Peneus' eddies glistening silt
but gliding over the surface smooth as olive oil,
branching, breaking away from the river Styx,
the dark and terrible oath-stream of the gods.

850

And Prothous son of Tenthredon led the Magnesians,
men who lived around the Peneus, up along Mount Pelion
sloped in wind-whipped leaves. Racing Prothous led them on
and in his command sailed forty long black ships.

860

These, these were the captains of Achaea and the kings.
Now tell me, Muse, who were the bravest of them all,
of the men and chariot-teams that came with Atreus' sons?

The best by far of the teams were Eumelus' mares
and Pheres' grandson drove them—swift as birds,
matched in age and their glossy coats and matched
to a builder's level flat across their backs.
Phoebus Apollo lord of the silver bow
had bred them both in Perea, a brace of mares
that raced the War-god's panic through the lines.
But best by far of the men was Telamonian Ajax
while Achilles raged apart. The famed Achilles
towered over them all, he and the battle-team
that bore the peerless son of Peleus into war.
But off in his beaked seagoing ships he lay,
raging away at Atrides Agamemnon, king of armies,
while his men sported along the surf, marking time,
hurling the discus, throwing spears and testing bows.
And the horses, each beside its chariot, champing clover
and parsley from the marshes, waited, pawing idly.
Their masters' chariots stood under blankets now,
stored away in the tents while the rank and file,
yearning for their leader, the great man of war,
drifting here and there throughout the encampment,
hung back from the fighting.

870

880

But on the armies came
as if the whole earth were devoured by wildfire, yes,
and the ground thundered under them, deep as it does

for Zeus who loves the lightning, Zeus in all his rage
 when he lashes the ground around Typhoeus in Arima,
 there where they say the monster makes his bed of pain—
 so the earth thundered under their feet, armies trampling,
 sweeping through the plain at blazing speed. 890

Now the Trojans.

Iris the wind-quick messenger hurried down to Ilium,
 bearing her painful message, sent by storming Zeus.
 The Trojans assembled hard by Priam's gates,
 gathered together there, young men and old,
 and rushing closer, racing Iris addressed them,
 keying her voice to that of Priam's son Polites. 900
 He had kept a watch for the Trojans, posted atop
 old Aesyetes' tomb and poised to sprint for home
 at the first sign of Argives charging from the ships.
 Like him to the life, the racing Iris urged, "Old Priam,
 words, endless words—that is your passion, always,
 as once in the days of peace. But ceaseless war's upon us!
 Time and again I've gone to battle, fought with men
 but I've never seen an army great as this. Too much—
 like piling leaves or sand, and on and on they come,
 advancing across the plain to fight before our gates. 910
 Hector, I urge you first of all—do as I tell you.
 Armies of allies crowd the mighty city of Priam,
 true, but they speak a thousand different tongues,
 fighters gathered here from all ends of the realm.
 Let each chief give commands to the tribe he leads,
 move them out, marshal his own contingents—now!"

Hector missed nothing—that was a goddess' call.
 He broke up the assembly at once. They rushed to arms
 and all the gates flung wide and the Trojan mass surged out,
 horses, chariots, men on foot—a tremendous roar went up. 920

Now a sharp ridge rises out in front of Troy,
 all on its own and far across the plain
 with running-room around it, all sides clear.
 Men call it Thicket Ridge, the immortals call it
 the leaping Amazon Myrine's mounded tomb, and there
 the Trojans and allies ranged their troops for battle.

First, tall Hector with helmet flashing led the Trojans—
 Priam's son and in his command by far the greatest, bravest army,
 divisions harnessed in armor, veterans bristling spears.

And the noble son of Anchises led the Dardanians— 930
 Aeneas whom the radiant Aphrodite bore Anchises

down the folds of Ida, a goddess bedded with a man.
Not Aeneas alone but flanked by Antenor's two sons,
Acamas and Archelochus, trained for every foray.

And men who lived in Zelea under the foot of Ida,
a wealthy clan that drank the Aesepus' dark waters—
Trojans all, and the shining son of Lycaon led them on,
Pandarus, with the bow that came from Apollo's own hands.

And the men who held the land of Apaesus and Adrestia,
men who held Pityea, Terea's steep peaks—the units led
by Adrestus joined by Amphius trim in linen corslet,
the two good sons of Merops out of Percote harbor,
Merops adept beyond all men in the *mantic arts*.
He refused to let his two boys march to war,
this man-killing war, but the young ones fought him
all the way—the forces of black death drove them on.

940

And the men who lived around Percote and Practios,
men who settled Sestos, Abydos and gleaming Arisbe:
Asius son of Hyrtacus led them on, captain of armies,
Hyrtacus' offspring Asius—hulking, fiery stallions
bore him in from Arisbe, from the Selleis River.

950

Hippothous led the Pelasgian tribes of spearmen,
fighters who worked Larissa's dark rich plowland.
Hippothous and Pylaeus, tested soldier, led them on,
both sons of Pelasgian Lethus, Teutamus' scion.

Acamas and the old hero Pirous led the Thracians,
all the Hellespont bounds within her riptide straits.

Euphemus led the Cicones, fighters armed with spears,
son of Troezenus, Ceas' son, a warlord bred by the gods.

Pyraechmes led the Paeonians, reflex bows in hand,
hailing from Amydon far west and the broad river Axios,
Axios, clearest stream that flows across the earth.

960

That burly heart Pylaemenes led his Paphlagonians
out of Enetian country, land where the wild mules breed:
the men who held Cytorus and lived in range of Sesamus,
building their storied halls along the Parthenius River,
at Cromna, Aegialus and the highland fortress Erythini.

Odius and Epistrophus led the Halizonians out of Alybe
miles east where the mother lode of silver came to birth.

Chromis led the Mysian men with Ennomus seer of birds—
but none of his winged signs could beat off black death.
Down he went, crushed by racing Achilles' hands, destroyed
in the river where he slaughtered other Trojans too.

970

Ascanius strong as a god and Phorcys led the Phrygians
in from Ascania due east, primed for the clash of combat.

Mesthles and Antiphus led Maeonia's proud contingent,
Talaemenes' two sons sprung from the nymph of Gyge Lake
led on Maeonian units born and bred under Mount Tmolus.

Nastes led the Carians wild with barbarous tongues,
men who held Miletus, Phthires' ridges thick with timber,
Maeander's currents and Mount Mycale's craggy peaks.
Amphimachus and Nastes led their formations on,
Nastes and Amphimachus, Nomion's flamboyant sons.
Nastes strolled to battle decked in gold like a girl,
the fool! None of his trappings kept off grisly death—
down he went, crushed by racing Achilles' hands, destroyed
at the ford where battle-hard Achilles stripped his gold away.

980

And last, Sarpedon and valiant Glaucus marched the Lycians on
from Lycia far south, from the Xanthus' swirling rapids.

Reading 2

PLATO, THE PHAEDO

Introduction by James Eichler

Plato (circa 427–347 B.C.), a student of Socrates, established the basis for a major strand of Western philosophy called idealism. Like his teacher, he opposed the relativism of the Sophists and sought to define absolute standards of justice, beauty, good, etc. This, coupled with the influences of the Pythagoreans, and of Heraclitus and Parmenides, led him to develop a synthesis that addressed most of the philosophical problems of his day.

Plato is said to have been of aristocratic birth, and a critic of the democratic form of government so highly esteemed in Athens during its “golden age.” Because, in 399 B.C., a restored Athenian democracy made Socrates a scapegoat for its ill fortunes in the Peloponnesian War, and because Plato was personally associated with Socrates, and related to members of the short-lived but infamous Thirty Tyrant Regime imposed by the victorious Spartans at the end of that war, he left Athens following Socrates’ execution, returning in 387 B.C. to establish a school (The Academy) in which he taught until his death. He also wrote a series of dialogues—among them the *Apology*, the *Crito*, the *Republic*, and the *Laws*. These dialogues preserved his thought for succeeding generations of philosophers.

One theme which permeates these writings is the nature of virtue and the need to live the “good life.” In the dialogue entitled the *Phaedo*, which recounts Socrates’ death, Plato describes the good life and the key role philosophy plays in its attainment. In reading the *Phaedo*, it will be helpful to keep several questions in mind. How does Plato define reality or truth (ontology)? What are its qualities? How does he think one can know that reality or truth (epistemology)? Given his definition of truth, how then should one apply it to his or her life (ethics)? What will be the reward for doing so and how does this imply order and justice in the universe? What does Plato have to say about God? What about human nature, the soul, or death? What did Socrates mean in the dialogue when he said he had no fear of death, because he had “practiced dying” his entire life? How do Plato’s views of reality, humanity, and the afterlife inspire religious and philosophical systems of thought we follow today? Do we define a virtuous life in similar ways? Finally, consider why Plato chose to write in the form of conversations and make Socrates his chief spokesman. What purposes might this have served for him?

In reading this, note that Plato equates the intellect with the soul, and that for him, the improvement of one translates into the improvement of the other. On moral grounds then, Plato

makes a strong case for rationalism as a guide to “the good life.” His emphasis on the importance of spirit and idea shapes his answers to the questions listed above, and has influenced Western thought so pervasively that philosophers and theologians of the twentieth century still acknowledge their debt to him.

PHAEDO

Plato

CHARACTERS OF THE DIALOGUE

PHAEDO

The Narrator

ECHECRATES

SOCRATES

APOLLODORUS

CEBES

CRITO

SIMMIAS

THE SERVANT OF THE ELEVEN

SCENE—*The Prison of Socrates*

Echecrates. Were you with Socrates yourself, Phaedo, on that day when he drank the poison in the prison, or did you hear the story from someone else?

Phaedo. I was there myself, Echecrates.

Ech. Then what was it that our master said before his death, and how did he die? I should be very glad if you would tell me. None of our citizens go very much to Athens now; and no stranger has come from there for a long time who could give us any definite account of these things, except that he drank the poison and died. We could learn nothing beyond that.

Phaedo. Then have you not heard about the trial either, how that went?

Ech. Yes, we were told of that, and we were rather surprised to find that he did not die till so long after the trial. Why was that, Phaedo?

Phaedo. It was an accident, Echecrates. The stern of the ship, which the Athenians send to Delos, happened to have been crowned on the day before the trial.

Ech. And what is this ship?

Phaedo. It is the ship, as the Athenians say, in which Theseus took the seven youths and the seven maidens to Crete, and saved them from death, and himself was saved. The Athenians made a vow then to Apollo, the story goes, to send a sacred mission to Delos every year, if they should be saved; and from that time to this they have always sent it to the god, every year. They have a law to keep the city pure as soon as the mission begins, and not to execute any sentence of death until the ship has returned from Delos; and sometimes, when it is detained by contrary winds, that is a long while. The sacred mission begins when the priest of Apollo crowns the

stern of the ship; and as I said, this happened to have been done on the day before the trial. That was why Socrates lay so long in prison between his trial and his death.

Ech. But tell me about his death, Phaedo. What was said and done, and which of his friends were with our master? Or would not the authorities let them be there? Did he die alone?

Phaedo. Oh, no; some of them were there, indeed several.

Ech. It would be very good of you, if you are not busy, to tell us the whole story as exactly as you can.

Phaedo. No, I have nothing to do, and I will try to relate it. Nothing is more pleasant to me than to recall Socrates to my mind, whether by speaking of him myself or by listening to others.

Ech. Indeed, Phaedo, you will have an audience like yourself. But try to tell us everything that happened as precisely as you can.

Phaedo. Well, I myself was strangely moved on that day. I did not feel that I was being present at the death of a dear friend; I did not pity him, for he seemed to me happy, Echecrates, both in his bearing and in his words, so fearlessly and nobly did he die. I could not help thinking that the gods would watch over him still on his journey to the other world, and that when he arrived there it would be well with him, if it was ever well with any man. Therefore I had scarcely any feeling of pity, as you would expect at such a mournful time. Neither did I feel the pleasure which I usually felt at our philosophical discussions; for our talk was of philosophy. A very singular feeling came over me, a strange mixture of pleasure and pain when I remembered that he was presently to die. All of us who were there were in much the same state, laughing and crying by turns; particularly Apollodorus. I think you know the man and his ways.

Ech. Of course I do.

Phaedo. Well, he did not restrain himself at all and I myself and the others were greatly agitated too.

Ech. Who were there, Phaedo?

Phaedo. Of native Athenians, there was this Apollodorus, and Critobulus, and his father Crito, and Hermogenes, and Epigenes, and Aeschines, and Antisthenes. Then there was Ctesippus the Paeanian, and Menexenus, and some other Athenians. Plato I believe was ill.

Ech. Were any strangers there?

Phaedo. Yes, there was Simmias of Thebes, and Cebes, and Phaedondes; and Eucleides and Terpsion from Megara.

Ech. But Aristippus and Cleombrotus, were they present?

Phaedo. No, they were not. They were said to be in Aegina.

Ech. Was anyone else there?

Phaedo. No, I think that these were all.

Ech. Then tell us about your conversation.

Phaedo. I will try to relate the whole story to you from the beginning. On the previous days I and the others had always met in the morning at the court where the trial was held, which was close to the prison; and then we had gone in to Socrates. We used to wait each morning until the prison was opened, conversing, for it was not opened early. When it was opened we used to go in to Socrates, and we generally spent the whole day with him. But on that morning we met earlier than usual; for the evening before we had learned, on leaving the prison, that the ship had arrived from Delos. So

II

59

III

we arranged to be at the usual place as early as possible. When we reached the prison, the porter, who generally let us in, came out to us and bade us wait a little, and not to go in until he summoned us himself: "For the Eleven," he said, "are releasing Socrates from his fetters and giving directions for his death today." In no great while he returned and bade us enter. So we went in and found Socrates just released, and Xanthippe—you know her—sitting by him, holding his child in her arms. When Xanthippe saw us, she wailed aloud, and cried, in her woman's way, "This is the last time, Socrates, that you will talk with your friends, or they with you." And Socrates glanced at Crito, and said, "Crito, let her be taken home." So some of Crito's servants led her away weeping bitterly and beating her breast. But Socrates sat up on the bed, and bent his leg and rubbed it with his hand, and while he was rubbing it said to us, How strange a thing is what men call pleasure! How wonderful is its relation to pain, which seems to be the opposite of it! They will not come to a man together; but if he pursues the one and gains it, he is almost forced to take the other also, as if they were two distinct things united at one end. And I think, said he, that if Aesop had noticed them he would have composed a fable about them, to the effect that God had wished to reconcile them when they were quarreling, and that, when he could not do that, he joined their ends together; and that therefore whenever the one comes to a man, the other is sure to follow. That is just the case with me. There was pain in my leg caused by the chains, and now, it seems, pleasure is come following the pain.

60

Cebes interrupted him and said, By the bye, Socrates, I am glad that you reminded me. Several people have been inquiring about your poems, the hymn to Apollo, and Aesop's fables which you have put into meter, and only a day or two ago Evenus asked me what was your reason for writing poetry on coming here, when you had never written a line before. So if you wish me to be able to answer him when he asks me again, as I know that he will, tell me what to say.

IV

Then tell him the truth, Cebes, he said. Say that it was from no wish to pose as a rival to him, or to his poems. I knew that it would not be easy to do that. I was only testing the meaning of certain dreams and acquitting my conscience about them, in case they should be bidding me make this kind of music. The fact is this. The same dream used often to come to me in my past life, appearing in different forms at different times, but always saying the same words, "Socrates, work at music and compose it." Formerly I used to think that the dream was encouraging me and cheering me on in what was already the work of my life, just as the spectators cheer on different runners in a race. I supposed that the dream was encouraging me to create the music at which I was working already, for I thought that philosophy was the highest music, and my life was spent in philosophy. But then, after the trial, when the feast of the god delayed my death, it occurred to me that the dream might possibly be bidding me create music in the popular sense, and that in that case I ought to do so, and not to disobey. I thought that it would be safer to acquit my conscience by creating poetry in obedience to the dream before I departed. So first I composed a hymn to the god whose feast it was. And then I turned such fables of Aesop as I knew, and had ready to my hand, into verse, taking those which came first; for I reflected that a man who means to be a poet has to use fiction and not facts for his poems; and I could not invent fiction myself.

61

Tell Evenus this, Cebes, and bid him farewell from me; and tell him to follow me as quickly as he can, if he is wise. I, it seems, shall depart today, for that is the will of the Athenians.

V

And Simmias said, What strange advice to give Evenus, Socrates! I have often met him, and from what I have seen of him I think that he is certainly not at all the man to take it, if he can help it.

What, he said, is not Evenus a philosopher?

Yes, I suppose so, replied Simmias.

Then Evenus will wish to die, he said, and so will every man who is worthy of having any part in this study. But he will not lay violent hands on himself; for that, they say, is wrong. And as he spoke he put his legs off the bed on to the ground, and remained sitting thus for the rest of the conversation.

Then Cebes asked him, What do you mean, Socrates, by saying that it is wrong for a man to lay violent hands on himself, but that the philosopher will wish to follow the dying man?

What, Cebes? Have you and Simmias been with Philolaus, and not heard about these things?

Nothing very definite, Socrates.

Well, I myself only speak of them from hearsay, yet there is no reason why I should not tell you what I have heard. Indeed, as I am setting out on a journey to the other world, what could be more fitting for me than to talk about my journey and to consider what we imagine to be its nature? How could we better employ the interval between this and sunset?

Then what is their reason for saying that it is wrong for a man to kill himself, Socrates? It is quite true that I have heard Philolaus say, when he was living at Thebes, that it is not right; and I have heard the same thing from others, too, but I never heard anything definite on the subject from any of them.

You must be of good cheer, said he, possibly you will hear something some day. But perhaps you will be surprised if I say that this law, unlike every other law to which mankind is subject, is absolute and without exception; and that it is not true that death is better than life only for some persons and at some times. And perhaps you will be surprised if I tell you that these men, for whom it would be better to die, may not do themselves a service, but that they must await a benefactor from without.

Oh indeed, said Cebes, laughing quietly, and speaking in his native dialect.

Indeed, said Socrates, so stated it may seem strange, and yet perhaps a reason may be given for it. The reason which the secret teaching¹ gives, that man is in a kind of prison, and that he may not set himself free, nor escape from it, seems to me rather profound and not easy to fathom. But I do think, Cebes, that it is true that the gods are our guardians, and that we men are a part of their property. Do you not think so?

I do, said Cebes.

Well then, said he, if one of your possessions were to kill itself, though you had not signified that you wished it to die, should you not be angry with it? Should you not punish it, if punishment were possible?

Certainly, he replied.

Then in this way perhaps it is not unreasonable to hold that no man has a right to take his own life, but that he must wait until God sends some necessity upon him, as has now been sent upon me.

¹ The Esoteric system of the Pythagoreans.

Yes, said Cebes, that does seem natural. But you were saying just now that the philosopher will desire to die. Is not that a paradox, Socrates, if what we have just been saying, that God is our guardian and that we are his property, be true? It is not reasonable to say that the wise man will be content to depart from this service, in which the gods, who are the best of all rulers, rule him. He will hardly think that when he becomes free he will take better care of himself than the gods take of him. A fool perhaps might think so, and say that he would do well to run away from his master; he might not consider that he ought not to run away from a good master, but that he ought to remain with him as long as possible, and so in his thoughtlessness he might run away. But the wise man will surely desire to remain always with one who is better than himself. But if this be true, Socrates, the reverse of what you said just now seems to follow. The wise man should grieve to die, and the fool should rejoice.

VII

I thought Socrates was pleased with Cebes' insistence. He looked at us, and said, Cebes is always examining arguments. He will not be convinced at once by anything that one says.

63

Yes, Socrates, said Simmias, but I do think that now there is something in what Cebes says. Why should really wise men want to run away from masters who are better than themselves, and lightly quit their service? And I think Cebes is aiming his argument at you, because you are so ready to leave us, and the gods, who are good rulers, as you yourself admit.

You are right, he said. I suppose you mean that I must defend myself against your charge, as if I were in a court of justice.

That is just our meaning, said Simmias.

Well then, he replied, let me try to make a more successful defense to you than I did to the judges at my trial. I should be wrong, Cebes and Simmias, he went on, not to grieve at death, if I did not think that I was going to live both with other gods who are good and wise, and with men who have died and who are better than the men of this world. But you must know that I hope that I am going to live among good men, though I am not quite sure of that. But I am so sure as I can be in such matters that I am going to live with gods who are very good masters. And therefore I am not so much grieved at death; I am confident that the dead have some kind of existence, and, as has been said of old, an existence that is far better for the good than for the wicked.

VIII

Well, Socrates, said Simmias, do you mean to go away and keep this belief to yourself, or will you let us share it with you? It seems to me that we too have an interest in this good. And it will also serve as your defense, if you can convince us of what you say.

Only, Socrates, said Crito, that the man who is going to give you the poison has been telling me to warn you not to talk much. He says that talking heats people, and that the action of the poison must not be counteracted by heat. Those who excite themselves sometimes have to drink it two or three times.

Let him be, said Socrates; let him mind his own business, and be prepared to give me the poison twice, or, if need be, thrice.

I knew that would be your answer, said Crito, but the man has been importunate.

Never mind him, he replied. But I wish not to explain to you, my judges, why it seems to me that a man who has really spent his life in philosophy has reason to be of good cheer when he is about to die, and may well hope after death to gain in the other world the greatest good. I will try to show you, Simmias and Cebes, how this may be.

64

The world, perhaps, does not see that those who rightly engage in philosophy study only dying and death. And, if this be true, it would be surely strange for a man all through his life to desire only death, and then, when death comes to him, to be vexed at it, when it has been his study and his desire for so long.

Simmias laughed, and said: Indeed, Socrates, you make me laugh, though I am scarcely in a laughing humor now. If the multitude heard that, I fancy they would think that what you say of philosophers is quite true; and my countrymen would entirely agree with you that philosophers are indeed eager to die, and they would say that they know full well that philosophers deserve to be put to death.

And they would be right, Simmias, except in saying that they know it. They do not know in what sense the true philosopher is eager to die, or what kind of death he deserves, or in what sense he deserves it. Let us dismiss them from our thoughts, and converse by ourselves. Do we believe death to be anything?

We do, replied Simmias.

And do we not believe it to be the separation of the soul from the body? Does not death mean that the body comes to exist by itself, separated from the soul, and that the soul exists by herself, separated from the body? What is death but that?

It is that, he said.

Now consider, my good friend, if you and I are agreed on another point which I think will help us to understand the question better. Do you think that a philosopher will care very much about what are called pleasures, such as the pleasures of eating and drinking?

Certainly not, Socrates, said Simmias.

Or about the pleasures of sexual passion?

Indeed, no.

And, do you think that he holds the remaining cares of the body in high esteem? Will he think much of getting fine clothes, and sandals, and other bodily adornments, or will he despise them, except so far as he is absolutely forced to meddle with them?

The real philosopher, I think, will despise them, he replied.

In short, said he, you think that his studies are not concerned with the body? He stands aloof from it, as far as he can, and turns toward the soul?

I do. *yes*

* Well then, in these matters, first, it is clear that the philosopher releases his soul from communion with the body, so far as he can, beyond all other men?

It is.

And does not the world think, Simmias, that if a man has no pleasure in such things, and does not take his share in them, his life is not worth living? Do not they hold that he who thinks nothing of bodily pleasures is almost as good as dead?

Indeed you are right.

But what about the actual acquisition of wisdom? If the body is taken as a companion in the search for wisdom, is it a hindrance or not? For example, do sight and hearing convey any real truth to men? Are not the very poets forever telling us that we neither hear nor see anything accurately? But if these senses of the body are not accurate or clear, the others will hardly be so, for they are all less perfect than these, are they not?

Yes, I think so, certainly, he said.

Then when does the soul attain truth? he asked. We see that, as often as she seeks to investigate anything in company with the body, the body leads her astray.

True.

Is it not by reasoning, if at all, that any real truth becomes manifest to her?

Yes.

And she reasons best, I suppose, when none of the senses, whether hearing, or sight, or pain, or pleasure, harasses her; when she has dismissed the body, and released herself as far as she can from all intercourse or contact with it, and so, coming to be as much alone with herself as is possible, strives after real truth.

That is so.

And here too the soul of the philosopher very greatly despises the body, and flies from it, and seeks to be alone by herself, does she not?

Clearly.

And what do you say to the next point, Simmias? Do we say that there is such a thing as absolute justice, or not?

Indeed we do.

And absolute beauty, and absolute good?

Of course.

Have you ever seen any of them with your eyes?

Indeed I have not, he replied.

Did you ever grasp them with any bodily sense? I am speaking of all absolutes, whether size, or health, or strength; in a word, of the essence or real being of everything. Is the very truth of things contemplated by the body? Is it not rather the case that the man who prepares himself most carefully to apprehend by his intellect the essence of each thing which he examines will come nearest to the knowledge of it?

Certainly.

And will not a man attain to this pure thought most completely if he goes to each thing, as far as he can, with his mind alone, taking neither sight nor any other sense along with his reason in the process of thought, to be an encumbrance? In every case he will pursue pure and absolute being, with his pure intellect alone. He will be set free as far as possible from the eye and the ear and, in short, from the whole body, because intercourse with the body troubles the soul, and hinders her from gaining truth and wisdom. Is it not he who will attain the knowledge of real being, if any man will?

Your words are admirably true, Socrates, said Simmias.

And, he said, must not all this cause real philosophers to reflect, and make them say to each other, It seems that there is a narrow path which will bring us safely to our journey's end, with reason as our guide. As long as we have this body, and an evil of that sort is mingled with our souls, we shall never fully gain what we desire; and that is truth. For the body is forever taking up our time with the care which it needs; and, besides, whenever diseases attack it, they hinder us in our pursuit of real being. It fills us with passions, and desires, and fears, and all manner of phantoms, and much foolishness; and so, as the saying goes, in very truth we can never think at all for it. It alone and its desires cause wars and factions and battles; for the origin of all wars is the pursuit of wealth,² and we are forced to pursue wealth because we live in slavery to the cares of the body. And therefore, for all these reasons, we have no leisure for philosophy. And last of all, if we ever are free from the body for a time, and then turn to examine some

Search for truth
through reason to
acquire wisdom.

Separation of soul
from body is the
ultimate acquisition of
wisdom.

66

XI

²Cf. *Republic* 373d.

matter, it falls in our way at every step of the inquiry, and causes confusion and trouble and panic, so that we cannot see the truth for it. Verily we have learned that if we are to have any pure knowledge at all, we must be freed from the body; the soul by herself must behold things as they are. Then, it seems, after we are dead, we shall gain the wisdom which we desire, and for which we say we have a passion, but not while we are alive, as the argument shows. For if it be not possible to have pure knowledge while the body is with us, one of two things must be true: either we cannot gain knowledge at all, or we can gain it only after death. For then, and not till then, will the soul exist by herself, separate from the body. And while we live, we shall come nearest to knowledge, if we have no communion or intercourse with the body beyond what is absolutely necessary, and if we are not defiled with its nature. We must live pure from it until God himself releases us. And when we are thus pure and released from its follies, we shall dwell, I suppose, with others who are pure like ourselves, and we shall of ourselves know all that is pure; and that may be the truth. For I think that the impure is not allowed to attain to the pure. Such, Simmias, I fancy must needs be the language and the reflection of the true lovers of knowledge. Do you not agree with me?

Most assuredly I do, Socrates.

And, my friend, said Socrates, if this be true, I have good hope that, when I reach the place whither I am going, I shall there, if anywhere, gain fully that which we have sought so earnestly in the past. And so I shall set forth cheerfully on the journey that is appointed me today, and so may every man who thinks that his mind is prepared and purified.

That is quite true, said Simmias.

And does not the purification consist, as we have said, in separating the soul from the body, as far as is possible, and in accustoming her to collect and rally herself as much as she can, both now and hereafter, released from the bondage of the body?

Yes, certainly, he said.

Is not what we call death a release and separation of the soul from the body?

Undoubtedly, he replied.

And the true philosopher, we hold, is alone in his constant desire to set his soul free? His study is simply the release and separation of the soul from the body, is it not?

Clearly.

Would it not be absurd then, as I began by saying for a man to complain at death coming to him, when in his life he has been preparing himself to live as nearly in a state of death as he could? Would not that be absurd?

Yes, indeed.

In truth, then, Simmias, he said, the true philosopher studies to die, and to him of all men is death least terrible. Now look at the matter in this way. In everything he is at enmity with his body, and he longs to possess his soul alone. Would it not then be most unreasonable if he were to fear and complain when he has his desire, instead of rejoicing to go to the place where he hopes to gain the wisdom that he has passionately longed for all his life, and to be released from the company of his enemy? Many a man has willingly gone to the other world, when a human love or wife or son has died, in the hope of seeing there those whom he longed for, and of being with them: and will a man who has a real passion for wisdom, and a firm hope of really finding wisdom in the other world and nowhere else, grieve at death, and not depart rejoicing? Nay, my friend, you ought not to think that, if he be truly a philosopher. He will be firmly convinced that

67

XII

68

In 1291/13

there and nowhere else will he meet with wisdom in its purity. And if this be so, would it not, I repeat, be very unreasonable for such a man to fear death?

Yes, indeed, he replied, it would.

Does not this show clearly, he said, that any man whom you see grieving at the approach of death is after all no lover of wisdom, but a lover of his body? He is also, most likely, a lover either of wealth, or of honor, or, it may be, of both. XIII

Yes, he said, it is as you say.

Well then, Simmias, he went on, does not what is called courage belong especially to the philosopher?

Certainly I think so, he replied.

And does not temperance, the quality which even the world calls temperance, and which means to despise and control and govern the passions—does not temperance belong only to such men as most despise the body, and pass their lives in philosophy?

Of necessity, he replied.

For if you will consider the courage and the temperance of other men, said he, you will find that they are strange things.

How so, Socrates?

You know, he replied, that all other men regard death as one of the great evils to which mankind is subject?

Indeed they do, he said.

And when the brave men of them submit to death, do not they do so from a fear of still greater evils?

Yes.

Then all men but the philosopher are brave from fear and because they are afraid. Yet it is rather a strange thing for a man to be brave out of fear and cowardice.

Indeed it is.

And are not the orderly men of them in exactly the same case? Are not they temperate from a kind of intemperance? We should say that this cannot be; but in them this state of foolish temperance comes to that. They desire certain pleasures, and fear to lose them; and so they abstain from other pleasures because they are mastered by these. Intemperance is defined to mean being under the dominion of pleasure, yet they only master certain pleasures because they are mastered by others. But that is exactly what I said just now—that, in a way, they are made temperate from intemperance.

It seems to be so.

↳ looks of the body

My dear Simmias, I fear that virtue is not really to be bought in this way, by bartering pleasure for pleasure, and pain for pain, and fear for fear, and the greater for the less, like coins. There is only one sterling coin for which all these things ought to be exchanged, and that is wisdom. All that is bought and sold for this and with this, whether courage, or temperance, or justice, is real; in one word, true virtue cannot be without wisdom, and it matters nothing whether pleasure, and fear, and all other such things are present or absent. But I think that the virtue which is composed of pleasures and fears bartered with one another, and severed from wisdom, is only a shadow of true virtue, and that it has no freedom, nor health, nor truth. True virtue in reality is a kind of purifying from all these things; and temperance, and justice, and courage, and wisdom itself are the purification. And I fancy that the men who established our mysteries had a very real meaning: in truth they have been telling us in parables all the time that

temperance - abstaining from pleasures
courage - facing danger
justice - giving each his due
wisdom - knowledge
to achieve good
to true virtue

whosoever comes to Hades uninitiated and profane will lie in the mire, while he that has been purified and initiated shall dwell with the gods. For "the thyrsus-bearers are many," as they say in the mysteries, "but the inspired few." And by these last, I believe, are meant only the true philosophers. And I in my life have striven as hard as I was able, and have left nothing undone, that I might become one of them. Whether I have striven in the right way, and whether I have succeeded or not, I suppose that I shall learn in a little while, when I reach the other world, if it be the will of God.

That is my defense, Simmias and Cebes, to show that I have reason for not being angry or grieved at leaving you and my masters here. I believe that in the next world, no less than in this, I shall meet with good masters and friends, though the multitude are incredulous of it. And if I have been more successful with you in my defense than I was with my Athenian judges, it is well.

When Socrates had finished, Cebes replied to him, and said, I think that for the most part you are right, Socrates. But men are very incredulous of what you have said of the soul. They fear that she will no longer exist anywhere when she has left the body, but that she will be destroyed and perish on the very day of death. They think that the moment that she is released and leaves the body, she will be dissolved and vanish away like breath or smoke, and thenceforward cease to exist at all. If she were to exist somewhere as a whole, released from the evils which you enumerated just now, we should have good reason to hope, Socrates, that what you say is true. But it will need no little persuasion and assurance to show that the soul exists after death, and continues to possess any power or wisdom.

True, Cebes, said Socrates; but what are we to do? Do you wish to converse about these matters and see if what I say is probable?

I for one, said Cebes, should gladly hear your opinion about them.

I think, said Socrates, that no one who heard me now, even if he were a comic poet, would say that I am an idle talker about things which do not concern me. So, if you wish it, let us examine this question.

Let us consider whether or not the souls of men exist in the next world after death, thus. There is an ancient belief, which we remember, that on leaving this world they exist there, and that they return hither and are born again from the dead. But if it be true that the living are born from the dead, our souls must exist in the other world; otherwise they could not be born again. It will be a sufficient proof that this is so if we can really prove that the living are born only from the dead. But if this is not so, we shall have to find some other argument.

Exactly, said Cebes.

Well, said he, the easiest way of answering the question will be to consider it not in relation to men only, but also in relation to all animals and plants, and in short to all things that are generated. Is it the case that everything which has an opposite is generated only from its opposite? By opposites I mean the honorable and the base, the just and the unjust, and so on in a thousand other instances. Let us consider then whether it is necessary for everything that has an opposite to be generated only from its own opposite. For instance, when anything becomes greater, I suppose it must have been less and then become greater?

Yes.

And if a thing becomes less, it must have been greater, and afterward become less?

That is so, said he.

XIV

70

XV

71

And further, the weaker is generated from the stronger, and the swifter from the slower?

Certainly.

And the worse is generated from the better, and the more just from the more unjust?

Of course.

Then it is sufficiently clear to us that all things are generated in this way, opposites from opposites?

Quite so.

And in every pair of opposites, are there not two generations between the two members of the pair, from the one to the other, and then back again from the other to the first? Between the greater and the less are growth and diminution, and we say that the one grows and the other diminishes, do we not?

Yes, he said.

And there is division and composition, and cold and hot, and so on. In fact, is it not a universal law, even though we do not always express it in so many words, that opposites are generated always from one another, and that there is a process of generation from one to the other?

It is, he replied.

Well, said he, is there an opposite to life, in the same way that sleep is the opposite of being awake? XVI

Certainly, he answered.

What is it?

Death, he replied.

Then if life and death are opposites, they are generated the one from the other: they are two, and between them there are two generations. Is it not so?

Of course.

Now, said Socrates, I will explain to you one of the two pairs of opposites of which I spoke just now, and its generations, and you shall explain to me the other. Sleep is the opposite of waking. From sleep is produced the state of waking, and from the state of waking is produced sleep. Their generations are, first, to fall asleep; secondly, to awake. Is that clear? he asked.

Yes, quite.

Now then, said he, do you tell me about life and death. Death is the opposite of life, is it not?

It is.

And they are generated the one from the other?

Yes.

Then what is that which is generated from the living?

The dead, he replied.

And what is generated from the dead?

I must admit that it is the living.

Then living things and living men are generated from the dead, Cebes?

Clearly, said he.

Then our souls exist in the other world? he said.

Apparently.

Now of these two generations the one is certain? Death I suppose is certain enough, is it not?

Yes, quite, he replied.

What then shall we do? said he. Shall we not assign an opposite generation to correspond? Or is nature imperfect here? Must we not assign some opposite generation to dying?

I think so, certainly, he said.

And what must it be?

To come to life again.

And if there be such a thing as a return to life, he said, it will be a generation from the dead to the living, will it not?

It will, certainly.

Then we are agreed on this point: namely, that the living are generated from the dead no less than the dead from the living. But we agreed that, if this be so, it is sufficient proof that the souls of the dead must exist somewhere, whence they come into being again.

I think, Socrates, that that is the necessary result of our premises.

And I think, Cebes, said he, that our conclusion has not been an unfair one. For if opposites did not always correspond with opposites as they are generated, moving as it were round in a circle, and there was generation in a straight line forward from one opposite only, with no turning or return to the other, then, you know, all things would come at length to have the same form and be in the same state, and would cease to be generated at all. XVII

What do you mean? he asked.

It is not at all hard to understand my meaning, he replied. If, for example, the one opposite, to go to sleep, existed without the corresponding opposite, to wake up, which is generated from the first, then all nature would at last make the tale of Endymion meaningless, and he would no longer be conspicuous; for everything else would be in the same state of sleep that he was in. And if all things were compounded together and never separated, the Chaos of Anaxagoras would soon be realized. Just in the same way, my dear Cebes, if all things in which there is any life were to die, and when they were dead were to remain in that form and not come to life again, would not the necessary result be that everything at last would be dead, and nothing alive? For if living things were generated from other sources than death, and were to die, the result is inevitable that all things would be consumed by death. Is it not so?

It is indeed, I think, Socrates, said Cebes; I think that what you say is perfectly true.

Yes, Cebes, he said, I think it is certainly so. We are not misled into this conclusion. The dead do come to life again, and the living are generated from them, and the souls of the dead exist; and with the souls of the good it is well, and with the souls of the evil it is evil. XVIII

And besides, Socrates, rejoined Cebes, if the doctrine which you are fond of stating, that our learning is only a process of recollection, be true, then I suppose we must have learned at some former time what we recollect now. And that would be impossible unless our souls had existed somewhere before they came into this human form. So that is another reason for believing the soul immortal. 72

But, Cebes, interrupted Simmias, what are the proofs of that? Recall them to me; I am not very clear about them at present.

One argument, answered Cebes, and the strongest of all, is that if you question men about anything in the right way, they will answer you correctly of themselves. But they

would not have been able to do that unless they had had within themselves knowledge and right reason. Again, show them such things as geometrical diagrams, and the proof of the doctrine is complete.³

And if that does not convince you, Simmias, said Socrates, look at the matter in another way and see if you agree then. You have doubts, I know, how what is called knowledge can be recollection.

Nay, replied Simmias, I do not doubt. But I want to recollect the argument about recollection. What Cebes undertook to explain has nearly brought your theory back to me and convinced me. But I am nonetheless ready to hear you undertake to explain it.

In this way, he returned. We are agreed, I suppose, that if a man remembers any-thing, he must have known it at some previous time.

Certainly, he said.

And are we agreed that when knowledge comes in the following way, it is recollection? When a man has seen or heard anything, or has perceived it by some other sense, and then knows not that thing only, but has also in his mind an impression of some other thing, of which the knowledge is quite different, are we not right in saying that he remembers the thing of which he has an impression in his mind?

What do you mean?

I mean this. The knowledge of a man is different from the knowledge of a lyre, is it not?

Certainly.

And you know that when lovers see a lyre, or a garment, or anything that their favorites are wont to use, they have this feeling. They know the lyre, and in their mind they receive the image of the youth whose the lyre was. That is recollection. For instance, someone seeing Simmias often is reminded of Cebes; and there are endless examples of the same thing.

Indeed there are, said Simmias.

Is not that a kind of recollection, he said; and more especially when a man has this feeling with reference to things which the lapse of time and inattention have made him forget?

Yes, certainly, he replied.

Well, he went on, is it possible to recollect a man on seeing the picture of a horse, or the picture of a lyre? Or to recall Simmias on seeing a picture of Cebes?

Certainly.

And it is possible to recollect Simmias himself on seeing a picture of Simmias?

No doubt, he said.

Then in all these cases there is recollection caused by similar objects, and also by dissimilar objects? 74
XIX

There is.

But when a man has a recollection caused by similar objects, will he not have a further feeling and consider whether the likeness to that which he recollects is defective in any way or not?

³ For an example of this see *Meno* 82a ff., where, as here, Socrates proves the doctrine of Reminiscence, and therefore the Immortality of the Soul, by putting judicious questions about geometry to a slave who was quite ignorant of geometry, and, with the help of diagrams, obtaining from him correct answers.

He will, he said.

Now see if this is true, he went on. Do we not believe in the existence of equality—not the equality of pieces of wood or of stones, but something beyond that—equality in the abstract? Shall we say that there is such a thing, or not?

Yes indeed, said Simmias, most emphatically we will.

And do we know what this abstract equality is?

Certainly, he replied.

Where did we get the knowledge of it? Was it not from seeing the equal pieces of wood, and stones, and the like, which we were speaking of just now? Did we not form from them the idea of abstract equality, which is different from them? Or do you think that is it not different? Consider the question in this way. Do not equal pieces of wood and stones appear to us sometimes equal and sometimes unequal, though in fact they remain the same all the time?

Certainly they do.

But did absolute equals ever seem to you to be unequal, or abstract equality to be inequality?

No, never, Socrates.

Then equal things, he said, are not the same as abstract equality?

No, certainly not, Socrates.

Yet is was from these equal things, he said, which are different from abstract equality, that you have conceived and got your knowledge of abstract equality?

That is quite true, he replied.

And that whether it is like them or unlike them?

Certainly.

But that makes no difference, he said. As long as the sight of one thing brings another thing to your mind, there must be recollection, whether or not the two things are like.

That is so.

Well then, said he, do the equal pieces of wood, and other similar equal things, of which we have been speaking, affect us at all this way? Do they seem to us to be equal, in the way that abstract equality is equal? Do they come short of being like abstract equality, or not?

Indeed, they come very short of it, he replied.

Are we agreed about this? A man sees something and thinks to himself, "This thing that I see aims at being like some other thing, but it comes short and cannot be like that other thing; it is inferior"; must not the man who thinks that have known at some previous time that other thing, which he says that it resembles, and to which it is inferior?

He must.

Well, have we ourselves had the same sort of feeling with reference to equal things, and to abstract equality?

Yes, certainly.

Then we must have had knowledge of equality before we first saw equal things, and perceived that they all strive to be like equality, and all come short of it.

That is so.

And we are agreed also that we have not, nor could we have, obtained the idea of equality except from sight or touch or some other sense; the same is true of all the senses.

learning = the recovery of knowledge which we previously possess
learning = recollection

Yes, Socrates, for the purposes of the argument that is so.

At any rate it is by the senses that we must perceive that all sensible objects strive to resemble absolute equality, and are inferior to it. Is not that so?

Yes.

Then before we began to see, and to hear, and to use the other senses, we must have received the knowledge of the nature of abstract and real equality; otherwise we could not have compared equal sensible objects with abstract equality, and seen that the former in all cases strive to be like the latter, though they are always inferior to it?

That is the necessary consequence of what we have been saying, Socrates.

Did we not see, and hear, and possess the other senses as soon as we were born?

Yes, certainly.

And we must have received the knowledge of abstract equality before we had these senses?

Yes.

Then, it seems, we must have received that knowledge before we were born?

It does.

Now if we received this knowledge before our birth, and were born with it, we knew, both before and at the moment of our birth, not only the equal, and the greater, and the less, but also everything of the same kind, did we not? Our present reasoning does not refer only to equality. It refers just as much to absolute good, and absolute beauty, and absolute justice, and absolute holiness; in short, I repeat, to everything which we mark with the name of the real, in the questions and answers of our dialectic. So we must have received our knowledge of all realities before we were born.

That is so.

And we must always be born with this knowledge, and must always retain it throughout life, if we have not each time forgotten it, after having received it. For to know means to receive and retain knowledge, and not to have lost it. Do not we mean by forgetting, the loss of knowledge, Simmias?

Yes, certainly, Socrates, he said.

But, I suppose, if it be the case that we lost at birth the knowledge which we received before we were born, and then afterward, by using our senses on the objects of sense, recovered the knowledge which we had previously possessed, then what we call learning is the recovering of knowledge which is already ours. And are we not right in calling that recollection?

Certainly.

For we have found it possible to perceive a thing by sight, or hearing, or any other sense, and thence to form a notion of some other thing, like or unlike, which had been forgotten, but with which this thing was associated. And therefore, I say, one of two things must be true. Either we are all born with this knowledge and retain it all our life; or, after birth, those whom we say are learning are only recollecting, and our knowledge is recollection.

Yes indeed, that is undoubtedly true, Socrates.

Then which do you choose, Simmias? Are we born with knowledge or do we recollect the things of which we have received knowledge before our birth?

I cannot say at present, Socrates.

Well, have you an opinion about this question? Can a man who knows give an account of what he knows, or not? What do you think about that?

Yes, of course he can, Socrates.

And do you think that everyone can give an account of the ideas of which we have been speaking?

I wish I did, indeed, said Simmias, but I am very much afraid that by this time tomorrow there will no longer be any man living able to do so as it should be done.

Then, Simmias, he said, you do not think that all men know these things?

Certainly not.

Then they recollect what they once learned?

Necessarily.

And when did our souls gain this knowledge? It cannot have been after we were born men.

No, certainly not.

Then it was before?

Yes.

* → Then, Simmias, our souls existed formerly, apart from our bodies, and possessed intelligence before they came into man's shape.⁴

Unless we receive this knowledge at the moment of birth, Socrates. That time still remains.

Well, my friend, and at what other time do we lose it? We agreed just now that we are not born with it; do we lose it at the same moment that we gain it, or can you suggest any other time?

I cannot, Socrates. I did not see that I was talking nonsense.

archetypes → Then, Simmias, he said, is not this the truth? If, as we are forever repeating, beauty, and good, and the other ideas⁵ really exist, and if we refer all the objects of sensible perception to these ideas which were formerly ours, and which we find to be ours still, our souls must have existed before ever we were born. But if they do exist, then our reasoning will have been thrown away. Is it so? If these ideas exist, does it not at once follow that our souls must have existed before we were born, and if they do not exist, then neither did our souls? XXII

Admirably put, Socrates, said Simmias. I think that the necessity is the same for the one as for the other. The reasoning has reached a place of safety in the common proof of the existence of our souls before we were born and of the existence of the ideas of which you spoke. Nothing is so evident to me as that beauty, and good, and the other ideas which you spoke of just now have a very real existence indeed. Your proof is quite sufficient for me. 77

But what of Cebes? said Socrates. I must convince Cebes too.

I think that he is satisfied, said Simmias, though he is the most skeptical of men in argument. But I think that he is perfectly convinced that our souls existed before we were born.

But I do not think myself, Socrates, he continued, that you have proved that the soul will continue to exist when we are dead. The common fear which Cebes spoke of, that she may be scattered to the winds at death, and that death may be the end of her exis- XXIII

⁴ Cf. Wordsworth's famous *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. It must be noticed that in one respect Wordsworth exactly reverses Plato's theory. With Wordsworth "Heaven lies about us in our infancy," and as we grow to manhood we gradually forget it. With Plato, we lose the knowledge which we possessed in a prior state of existence, at birth, and recover it, as we grow up.

⁵ For a fuller account of the ideas, see 100b ff.

tence, still stands in the way. Assuming that the soul is generated and comes together from some other elements, and exists before she ever enters the human body, why should she not come to an end and be destroyed, after she has entered into the body, when she is released from it?

You are right, Simmias, said Cebes. I think that only half the required proof has been given. It has been shown that our souls existed before we were born; but it must also be shown that our souls will continue to exist after we are dead, no less than that they existed before we were born, if the proof is to be complete.

That has been shown already, Simmias and Cebes, said Socrates, if you will combine this reasoning with our previous conclusion, that all life is generated from death. For if the soul exists in a previous state and if, when she comes into life and is born, she can only be born from death, and from a state of death, must she not exist after death too, since she has to be born again? So the point which you speak of has been already proved.

Still I think that you and Simmias would be glad to discuss this question further. XXIV
Like children, you are afraid that the wind will really blow the soul away and disperse her when she leaves the body, especially if a man happens to die in a storm and not in a calm.

Cebes laughed and said, Try and convince us as if we were afraid, Socrates; or rather, do not think that we are afraid ourselves. Perhaps there is a child within us who has these fears. Let us try and persuade him not to be afraid of death, as if it were a bug-bear.

You must charm him every day, until you have charmed him away, said Socrates.

And where shall we find a good charmer, Socrates, he asked, now that you are leaving us? 78

Hellas is a large country, Cebes, he replied, and good men may doubtless be found in it; and the nations of the Barbarians are many. You must search them all through for such a charmer, sparing neither money nor labor; for there is nothing on which you could spend money more profitably. And you must search for him among yourselves too, for you will hardly find a better charmer than yourselves.

That shall be done, said Cebes. But let us return to the point where we left off, if you will.

Yes, I will: why not?

Very good, he replied.

Well, said Socrates, must we not ask ourselves this question? What kind of thing is XXV
liable to suffer dispersion, and for what kind of thing have we to fear dispersion? And then we must see whether the soul belongs to that kind or not, and be confident or afraid about our own souls accordingly.

That is true, he answered.

Now is it not the compound and composite which is naturally liable to be dissolved in the same way in which it was compounded? And is not what is uncompounded alone not liable to dissolution, if anything is not?

I think that that is so, said Cebes.

And what always remains in the same state and unchanging is most likely to be uncompounded, and what is always changing and never the same is most likely to be compounded, I suppose?

Yes, I think so.

← Change 7

Now let us return to what we were speaking of before in the discussion, he said. Does the being, which in our dialectic we define as meaning absolute existence, remain always in exactly the same state, or does it change? Do absolute equality, absolute beauty, and every other absolute existence, admit of any change at all? Or does absolute existence in each case, being essentially uniform, remain the same and unchanging, and never in any case admit of any sort or kind of change whatsoever?

It must remain the same and unchanging, Socrates, said Cebes.

And what of the many beautiful things, such as men, and horses, and garments, and the like, and of all which bears the names of the ideas, whether equal, or beautiful, or anything else? Do they remain the same or is it exactly the opposite with them? In short, do they never remain the same at all, either in themselves or in their relations?

These things, said Cebes, never remain the same. → they do change

You can touch them, and see them, and perceive them with the other senses, while you can grasp the unchanging only by the reasoning of the intellect. These latter are invisible and not seen. Is it not so?

That is perfectly true, he said.

Let us assume then, he said, if you will, that there are two kinds of existence, the one visible, the other invisible. XXVI

Yes, he said.

And the invisible is unchanging, while the visible is always changing.

Yes, he said again.

Are not we men made up of body and soul?

There is nothing else, he replied.

And which of these kinds of existence should we say that the body is most like, and most akin to?

The visible, he replied; that is quite obvious.

And the soul? Is that visible or invisible?

It is invisible to man, Socrates, he said.

But we mean by visible and invisible, visible and invisible to man; do we not?

Yes; that is what we mean.

Then what do we say of the soul? Is it visible or not visible?

It is not visible.

Then is it invisible?

Yes.

Then the soul is more like the invisible than the body; and the body is like the visible.

That is necessarily so, Socrates.

Have we not also said that, when the soul employs the body in any inquiry, and makes use of sight, or hearing, or any other sense—for inquiry with the body means inquiry with the senses—she is dragged away by it to the things which never remain the same, and wanders about blindly, and becomes confused and dizzy, like a drunken man, from dealing with things that are ever changing?

Certainly.

But when she investigates any question by herself, she goes away to the pure, and eternal, and immortal, and unchangeable, to which she is akin, and so she comes to be ever with it, as soon as she is by herself, and can be so; and then she rests from her wanderings and dwells with it unchangingly, for she is dealing with what is unchanging.

And is not this state of the soul called wisdom?

soul leaves body to become pure, acquires knowledge

representation of archetype that experiences change

Indeed, Socrates, you speak well and truly, he replied.

Which kind of existence do you think from our former and our present arguments that the soul is more like and more akin to?

I think, Socrates, he replied, that after this inquiry the very dullest man would agree that the soul is infinitely more like the unchangeable than the changeable.

And the body?

That is like the changeable.

Consider the matter in yet another way. When the soul and the body are united, XXVIII
nature ordains the one to be a slave and to be ruled, and the other to be master and to 80
rule. Tell me once again, which do you think is like the divine, and which is like the
mortal? Do you not think that the divine naturally rules and has authority, and that the
mortal naturally is ruled and is a slave?

I do.

Then which is the soul like?

That is quite plain, Socrates. The soul is like the divine, and the body is like the mortal.

Now tell me, Cebes, is the result of all that we have said that the soul is most like the divine, and the immortal, and the intelligible, and the uniform, and the indissoluble, and the unchangeable; while the body is most like the human, and the mortal, and the unintelligible, and the multiform, and the dissoluble, and the changeable? Have we any other argument to show that this is not so, my dear Cebes?

We have not.

Then if this is so, is it not the nature of the body to be dissolved quickly, and of the soul to be wholly or very nearly indissoluble?⁶ XXIX

Certainly.

You observe, he said, that after a man is dead, the visible part of him, his body, which lies in the visible world and which we call the corpse, which is subject to dissolution and decomposition, is not dissolved and decomposed at once? It remains as it was for a considerable time, and even for a long time, if a man dies with his body in good condition and in the vigor of his life. And when the body falls in and is embalmed, like the mummies of Egypt, it remains nearly entire for an immense time. And should it decay, yet some parts of it, such as the bones and muscles, may almost be said to be immortal. Is it not so?

Yes.

And shall we believe that the soul, which is invisible, and which goes hence to a place that is like herself, glorious, and pure, and invisible, to Hades, which is rightly called the unseen world, to dwell with the good and wise God, whither, if it be the will of God, my soul too must shortly go—shall we believe that the soul, whose nature is so glorious, and pure, and invisible, is blown away by the winds and perishes as soon as she leaves the body, as the world says? Nay, dear Cebes and Simmias, it is not so. I will tell you what happens to a soul which is pure at her departure, and which in her life has had no intercourse that she could avoid with the body, and so draws after her, when she dies, no taint of the body, but has shunned it, and gathered herself into herself, for such

→ the body

⁶ Compare Bishop Butler's *Analogy*, Pt. I, Ch. I, where a similar argument is used: the soul being indiscernible is immortal. The argument based on the "divine" nature of the soul is, of course, also a modern one. See e.g. Lord Tenison, *In Memoriam*, LIV-LVI.

has been her constant study—and that only means that she has loved wisdom rightly, and has truly practiced how to die. Is not this the practice of death?

Yes, certainly.

Does not the soul, then, which is in that state, ^{goes} ~~go~~ away to the invisible that is like herself, and to the divine, and the immortal, and the wise, where she is released from error, and folly, and fear, and fierce passions, and all the other evils that fall to the lot of men, and is happy, and for the rest of time lives in very truth with the gods, as they say that the initiated do? Shall we affirm this, Cebes?

Yes, certainly, said Cebes.

But if she be defiled and impure when she leaves the body, from being ever with it, and serving it and loving it, and from being besotted by it and by its desires and pleasures, so that she thinks nothing true but what is bodily and can be touched, and seen, and eaten, and drunk, and used for men's lusts; if she has learned to hate, and tremble at, and fly from what is dark and invisible to the eye, and intelligible and apprehended by philosophy—do you think that a soul which is in that state will be pure and without alloy at her departure?

No, indeed, he replied.

She is penetrated, I suppose, by the corporeal, which the unceasing intercourse and company and care of the body has made a part of her nature.

Yes.

And, my dear friend, the corporeal must be burdensome, and heavy, and earthy, and visible; and it is by this that such a soul is weighed down and dragged back to the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible world of Hades, and haunts, it is said, the graves and tombs, where shadowy forms of souls have been seen, which are the phantoms of souls which were impure at their release and still cling to the visible; which is the reason why they are seen.⁷

That is likely enough, Socrates.

That is likely, certainly, Cebes; and these are not the souls of the good, but of the evil, which are compelled to wander in such places as a punishment for the wicked lives that they had lived; and their wanderings continue until, from the desire for the corporeal that clings to them, they are again imprisoned in a body.

And, he continued, they are imprisoned, probably, in the bodies of animals with habits similar to the habits which were theirs in their lifetime.

What do you mean by that, Socrates?

I mean that men who have practiced unbridled gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness probably enter the bodies of asses and suchlike animals. Do you not think so?

Certainly that is very likely.

And those who have chosen injustice, and tyranny, and robbery enter the bodies of wolves, and hawks, and kites. Where else should we say that such souls go?

No doubt, said Cebes, they go into such animals.

In short, it is quite plain, he said, whither each soul goes; each enters an animal with habits like its own.

Certainly, he replied, that is so.

81

XXX

XXXI

82

⁷ Professor Jowett compares Milton, *Comus*, 463 ff.

And of these, he said, the happiest, who go to the best place, are those who have practiced the popular and social virtues which are called temperance and justice, and which come from habit and practice, without philosophy or reason.

And why are they the happiest?

Because it is probable that they return into a mild and social nature like their own, such as that of bees, or wasps, or ants; or, it may be, into the bodies of men, and that from them are made worthy citizens.

Very likely.

But none but the philosopher or the lover of knowledge, who is wholly pure when he goes hence, is permitted to go to the race of the gods; and therefore, my friends, Simmias and Cebes, the true philosopher is temperate and refrains from all the pleasures of the body, and does not give himself up to them. It is not squandering his substance and poverty that he fears, as the multitude and the lovers of wealth do; nor again does he dread the dishonor and disgrace of wickedness, like the lovers of power and honor. It is not for these reasons that he is temperate. XXXII

No, it would be unseemly in him if he were, Socrates, said Cebes.

Indeed it would, he replied, and therefore all those who have any care for their souls, and who do not spend their lives in forming and molding their bodies, bid farewell to such persons, and do not walk in their ways, thinking that they know not whither they are going. They themselves turn and follow whithersoever philosophy leads them, for they believe that they ought not to resist philosophy, or its deliverance and purification.

→ Maybe Christianity came about because no one knew how to be a philosopher. People couldn't be told without some act of divine intervention, so they/God sent Jesus Christ to earth to tell them how to be philosophers, or lovers of purity.

Reading 3

OVID, THE ART OF LOVE

Introduction by Michael Graham

Ovid (whose full name was Publius Ovidius Naso) was a Roman poet, born in 43 B.C. His family was prominent, and he was trained as a lawyer. Despite his legal talent, however, he fell in love with poetry and decided to devote all his energies to writing it, and he became one of the leading lights in the literary culture of Augustan Rome—that is, among those writers who were active during the reign of the emperor Augustus (27 B.C.–14 A.D.), a group which also included the poet Virgil and the historian Livy.

Ovid's subject matter was wide-ranging, from tragedy to imaginary love letters to a poem on artificial aids to beauty, but he often returned to what seems to have been his favorite topic—love, or perhaps to be more specific, seduction. We cannot gauge his real expertise in this field, but he was certainly willing to offer advice, and did so in what is generally regarded as his masterpiece, the *Ars Amatoria*, or *Art of Love*, which appeared about 1 B.C. This long poem has been widely-read through the ages, enjoying, for instance, some popularity in the high middle ages as part of the inspiration behind the literary movement which has been labeled “courtly love.” The subject is one which continues to fascinate, although today's readers might be disturbed, or even shocked, by some of Ovid's basic assumptions about relations between the sexes.

In order to better understand Ovid as his original audience may have understood him, it is helpful to know a bit about social relations and literary culture in Augustan Rome. First of all, advice literature was a popular form during the period—with works available on fighting, farming and courting, just to name a few popular subjects. The “ars” in the poem's title, which is usually translated as “art,” might be better rendered as “technique.” Earlier love poets such as Catullus (84–54 B.C.) had offered readers flowery verses overflowing with passion, whereas Ovid adopted a much more businesslike approach; he would dispense cool advice rather than romantic rhapsodies.

Augustan Rome was a city of one million inhabitants, and it often seemed a rowdy, ungovernable place, full of young men with time on their hands. Well-born girls were usually married early in their teenage years, typically to men of similar social standing who were in their mid-twenties. Once married, wealthy women enjoyed a high degree of social freedom, and could control their own property. This left them much freer than the women of classical Athens, for instance. Fearful that Roman society was becoming too decadent, and that the family was breaking down, Augustus issued morality legislation designed to reinforce traditional family

and marital ties and to promote childbearing, particularly among upper-class Romans. In 18 B.C., he issued a law against adultery. To prove that he was serious, Augustus in 2 B.C. had to force Julia, his daughter and only child, into exile on a barren island due to her well-known extramarital affairs. It may be significant that Ovid wrote this poem in the year after Julia's banishment. Was it intended to offer ironic commentary on the times? Interestingly, Ovid himself was exiled in 8 A.D., but we do not know why. He died on the Black Sea, having never returned to Rome, in 17 A.D.

The *Art of Love* raises other questions as well. First of all, who do you think Ovid was writing for? Who would be in a position to take his advice? What references did he make to other works which you have read? What picture of Augustan Rome does this poem give you? Who were the women Ovid was writing about, and what basic assumptions about them did he make? Does the poem raise issues of relations between classes as well as genders? Do you think Ovid's advice is still useful today? Why or why not?

The Art of Love

Ovid

BOOK 1

Should anyone here in Rome lack finesse at love-making, let him
Try me—read my book, and results are guaranteed!
Technique is the secret. Charioteer, sailor, oarsman,
All need it. Technique can control
Love himself. As Automedon was charioteer to Achilles, 5
And Tiphys Jason's steersman, so I,
By Venus' appointment, am made Love's artificer, shall be known as
The Tiphys, the very Automedon of Love.
He's a wild handful, will often rebel against me,
But still just a child— 10
Malleable, easily disciplined. Chiron made young Achilles
A fine musician, hammered that fierce heart
On the anvil of peaceful artistry. So this future terror
To friend and foe alike went in awe, it's said,
Of his elderly teacher, at whose bidding the hand that in after- 15
Time bore down Hector was held out for the tawse.
As Chiron taught Achilles, so I am Love's preceptor:
Wild boys both, both goddess-born—and yet
Even bulls can be broken to plough, or spirited horses
Subdued with bridle and bit. 20
So Love shall likewise own my mastery, though his bowshots
Skewer my breast, though his torch
Flicker and sear me. The worse the wounds, the deeper the branding,
That much keener I to avenge
Such outrage. Nor shall I falsely ascribe my arts to Apollo: 25
No airy bird comes twittering advice

Into *my* ear, *I* never had a vision of the Muses

Herding sheep in Ascrea's valleys. This work is based
On experience: what I write, believe me, I have practised.
My poem will deal in truth.

30

Aid my enterprise, Venus! Respectable ladies, the kind who

Wear hairbands and ankle-length skirts,
Are hereby warned off. Safe love, legitimate liaisons
Will be my theme. This poem breaks no taboos.

35

First, then, you fledgling troopers in passion's service,

Comes the task of finding an object for your love.
Next, you must labour to woo and win your lady;

Thirdly, ensure that the affair will last.
Such are my limitations, such the ground I will cover,
The race I propose to run.

40

While you are fancy-free still, and can drive at leisure,

Pick a girl, tell her, 'You're the one I love.
And only you.' But this search means using your eyes: a mistress
Won't drop out of the sky at your feet.

45

A hunter's skilled where to spread his nets for the stag, senses

In which glen the wild boar lurks.
A fowler's familiar with copses, an expert angler
Knows the richest shoaling-grounds for fish.

You too, so keen to establish some long-term relationship,
Must learn, first, where girl is to be found.

50

Your search need not take you—believe me—on an overseas voyage:

A short enough trek will bring you to your goal.
True, Perseus fetched home Andromeda from the coloured Indies,
While Phrygian Paris abducted Helen in Greece,

But Rome can boast of so many and such dazzling beauties
You'd swear the whole world's talent was gathered here.

55

The girls of your city outnumber Gargara's wheatsheaves,
Methymna's grape-clusters, all

Birds on the bough, stars in the sky, fish in the ocean:
Venus indeed still haunts

60

Her son Aeneas' foundation. If you like budding adolescents

Any number of (guaranteed) maidens are here to delight
Your roving eye. You prefer young women? They'll charm you
By the thousand, you won't know which to choose.

And if you happen to fancy a more mature, experienced
Age-group, believe me, *they* show up in droves.

65

Here's what to do. When the sun's on the back of Hercules'

Lion, stroll down some shady colonnade,

- Pompey's, say, or Octavia's (for her dead son Marcellus:
 Extravagant marble facings, R.I.P.), 70
 Or Livia's, with its gallery of genuine Old Masters,
 Or the Danaids' Portico (note
 The artwork: Danaus' daughters plotting mischief for their cousins,
 Father attitudinizing with drawn sword).
 Don't miss the shrine of Adonis, mourned by Venus, 75
 Or the synagogue—Syrian Jews
 Worship there each Sabbath—or the linen-clad heifer-goddess's
 Memphian temple: Io makes many a maid what *she*
 Was to Jove. The very courts are hunting-grounds for passion;
 Amid lawyers' rebuttals love will often be found. 80
 Here, where under Venus' marble temple the Appian
 Fountain pulses its jets high in the air,
 Your jurisconsult's entrapped by Love's beguilements—
 Counsel to others, he cannot advise himself.
 Here, all too often, words fail the most eloquent pleader, 85
 And a new sort of case comes on—his own. He must
 Defend *himself* for a change, while Venus in her nearby
 Temple snickers at this reversal of roles.
- But the theatre's curving tiers should form your favourite
 Hunting-ground: here you are sure to find
 The richest returns, be your wish for lover or playmate,
 A one-night stand or a permanent affair.
 As ants hurry to and fro in column, mandibles
 Clutching grains of wheat
 (Their regular diet), as bees haunt fragrant pastures 95
 And meadows, hovering over the thyme,
 Flitting from flower to flower, so our fashionable ladies
 Swarm to the games in such crowds, I often can't
 Decide which I like. As spectators they come, come to be inspected:
 Chaste modesty doesn't stand a chance. 100
 Such incidents at the games go back to Romulus—
 Men without women, Sabine rape.
 No marble theatre then, no awnings, no perfumed saffron
 To spray the stage red:
 The Palatine woods supplied a leafy backdrop (nature's 105
 Scenery, untouched by art),
 While the tiers of seats were plain turf, and spectators shaded
 Their shaggy heads with leaves.
 Urgently brooding in silence, the men kept glancing
 About them, each marking his choice 110
 Among the girls. To the skirl of Etruscan flutes' rough triple
 Rhythm, the dancers stamped

- And turned. Amid cheers (applause then lacked discrimination)
 The king gave the sign for which
 They'd so eagerly watched. Project Rape was on. Up they sprang then 115
 With a lusty roar, laid hot hands on the girls.
 As timorous doves flee eagles, as a lambkin
 Runs when it sees the hated wolf,
 So this wild charge of men left the girls all panic-stricken,
 Not one had the same colour in her cheeks as before— 120
 The same nightmare for all, though terror's features varied:
 Some tore their hair, some just froze
 Where they sat; some, dismayed, kept silence, others vainly
 Yelled for Mamma; some wailed; some gaped;
 Some fled, some just stood there. So they were carried off as 125
 Marriage-bed plunder; even so, many contrived
 To make panic look fetching. Any girl who resisted her pursuer
 Too vigorously would find herself picked up
 And borne off regardless. 'Why spoil those pretty eyes with weeping?'
 She'd hear, 'I'll be all to you 130
 That your Dad ever was to your Mum.' (You alone found the proper
 Bounty for soldiers, Romulus: give me that,
 And I'll join up myself!) Ever since that day, by hallowed custom,
 Our theatres have always held dangers for pretty girls.
- Don't forget the races, either: the spacious Circus offers 135
 Chances galore. No need,
 Here, of private finger-talk, or secret signals,
 Nods conveying messages: you'll sit
 Right beside your mistress, without let or hindrance,
 So be sure to press against her wherever you can— 140
 An easy task: the seating-divisions restrict her,
 Regulations facilitate contact. Now find
 Some excuse to engage in friendly conversation,
 Casual small-talk at first—
 Ask, with a show of interest, whose are those horses 145
 Just coming past: find out
 Her favourite, back it yourself. When the long procession of ivory
 Deities approaches, be sure you give
 A big hand to Lady Venus. If some dust should settle
 In your girl's lap, flick it away 150
 With your fingers; and if there's no dust, still flick away—nothing:
 Let any excuse serve to prove your zeal.
 If her cloak's trailing, gather it up, make a great business
 Of rescuing it from the dirt—
 Instant reward for your gallantry, a licensed peep at 155
 Delectable ankles, and more.

Keep an eye on whoever may be sitting behind you,
 Don't let him rub his knee
 Against her smooth back. Light minds are captivated by trifles:
 Plumping out a cushion can often help, 160
 Or fanning the lady, or slipping a little footstool
 Under her dainty feet.

Such approaches will the Circus afford to a new courtship,
 Such, too, the crowded forum with its grim
 Sanded arena, where Cupid's a regular contestant, 165
 Where the blood-and-guts fancier gets bloodied himself:
 While he's chatting, and touching her hand, and checking the programme,
 And anxious (once he's placed his bet) to know
 Which contestant will win, the winged steel has transfixed him,
 He groans at the wound, becomes part 170
 Of the show he was watching. When Caesar lately staged that
 Naval mock-battle between Persians and Greeks,
 Young men and girls converged from east coast and west, the whole wide
 World was packed into Rome—
 With such a throng, who could fail to find what caught his fancy? 175
 Many a man was singed by some foreign flame!

Now Caesar is planning to fill in the final gaps of
 Empire: now the furthest East will be ours,
 Revenge fall on Parthia, joy lighten the grave of Crassus,
 Redeem the standards profaned 180
 By barbarian hands! The avenger's prepared, proclaims his
 Captaincy, though of green years: embraces a war
 No boy—no other boy—could direct. Why cravenly reckon
 The age of a god? These Caesars come to courage young,
 The surge of heavenly spirit outstrips mere calendars, 185
 Takes mean delays ill. A mere babe
 Was Hercules when he strangled those two serpents: even
 In the cradle he proved worthy of Jove.
 And you, Bacchus, still a youth, what age were *you* when conquered
 India bowed before your rod? 190
 With the years—and luck—of your father, boy, you'll fight this
 Campaign: with his years—and luck—you'll win.
 Such a debut befits so great a name: today prince of
 The youths, tomorrow of their seniors! Since
 You have brothers, avenge these brothers' insults; since a 195
 Father is yours, uphold a father's rights.
 Your father, your country's father, has armed you for battle;
 Your enemy has wrested *his* kingdom from
 A reluctant sire. Your righteous javelins shall match his

- Treacherous arrows. Justice and right shall march 200
 Before your banners. May these lost-cause Parthians likewise
 Lose every fight, may my prince bring the wealth of the East
 Back home! Mars and Caesar—one god, one god-to-be—endow him
 With your paternal powers as he sets forth!
 I prophesy victory for you, vow a song in your honour, 205
 Will extol you with loud praise:
 You'll stand and exhort your troops in words I have written—
 May my words, I pray, not fall short
 Of your valour! I'll speak of Parthian backs, of Roman courage,
 Of the shafts discharged by the foe 210
 As he retreats on horseback. If a Parthian flees to conquer
 What's left him for defeat? That's a bad
 Omen for warfare already. The day will come, most splendid
 Of beings, when you'll ride in gold behind
 Four snow-white steeds, preceded by captive chieftains, fetters 215
 About their necks to prevent the flight that brought
 Them safety before. Cheering youths will look on, and girls beside them,
 A day to make every heart run wild for joy;
 And when some girl inquires the names of the monarchs,
 Or the towns, rivers, hills portrayed
 On the floats, answer all her questions (and don't draw the line at
 Questions only): pretend
 You know even when you don't. *Here comes Euphrates*, tell her,
 With reed-fringed brow; those dark
 Blue tresses belong to Tigris, I fancy; there go Armenians, 225
 That's Persia, and that, h'r'm, is some
 Upland Achaemenid city. Both those men there are generals—
 Give the names if you know them; if not, invent.
- Banquets, too, give you an *entrée*, offer
 More to the palate than wine: 230
 There flushed Love has often clasped the horns of reclining
 Bacchus in a seductive embrace,
 And when wine has sodden Cupid's bibulous pinions
 He's grounded, too sluggish for the sport he's begun.
 Still, it takes *him* no time to shake out his damp plumage— 235
 But if Love merely brushes the breast
 You're wounded, it hurts. Wine rouses the heart, inclines to passion:
 Heavy drinking dilutes and banishes care
 In a sea of laughter, gives the poor man self-confidence,
 Smooths out wrinkles, puts paid 240
 To pain and sorrow. Then our age's rarest endowment,
 Simplicity, opens all hearts, as the god
 Dissipates guile. Men's minds have often been enchanted
 By girls at such times: ah, Venus in the wine
 Is fire within fire! Night and drink can impair your eye for beauty: 245

Don't trust the lamplight too much,
 It's deceptive. When Paris examined those goddesses, when he said, 'You
 Beat them both, Venus,' he did it in broad
 Daylight. But darkness hides faults, each blemish is forgiven:
 Any woman you name will pass 250
 As a beauty at night. Judge jewels or fine fabrics,
 A face or a figure, *by day*.

How list every female resort with prospects for the hunter?
 Sand-grains are fewer. Why tell of Baiae with
 Its yacht-fringed beaches and hot sulphurous thermal 255
 Baths? I met one tourist who came back
 Home from there with a nasty hole in his heart, said the waters
 Weren't half as healthy as report made out.
 Then there's Diana's woodland shrine, not far from the city,
 With its murderous slave-priest— 260
 Diana's a virgin, detests the shafts of Cupid: that's why
 People who go in the woods
 Always get hurt, always will.

So far my elegiacs

Have taught you which coverts to draw, where to spread
 Your erotic nets. What follows is more subtly artistic— 265
 How to snare the girl of your choice.
 All you gallants, mark and attend now; and you, the common
 People, encourage my task with a thumbs-up!

The first thing to get in your head is that every single
 Girl can be caught—and that you'll catch her if 270
 You set your toils right. Birds will sooner fall dumb in springtime,
 Cicadas in summer, or a hunting-dog

Turn his back on a hare, than a lover's bland inducements
 Can fail with a woman. Even one you suppose
 Reluctant will want it. Like men, girls love stolen passion, 275
 But are better at camouflaging their desires:

If masculine custom precluded courtship of women
 You'd find each besotted girl
 Taking the lead herself. A heifer amid lush pastures
 Lows to the bull, a mare 280

Whinnies at stallions; but our male libido's milder,
 Less rabid: man's sex has bounds
 Imposed by convention. Incest is out. Think of wretched Byblis—
 Burned up by her brother, expiating her crime
 With a suicide's noose. Myrrha loved her father (but hardly 285
 As a daughter should), and now she's straitjacketed
 Behind tree-bark, oozing those fragrant tears we use for
 Perfume, named after her: myrrh.
 Once in the shady valleys of woodland Ida

There roamed a milk-white bull,	290
Pride of the herd, spotless save for one single	
Black mark between his horns:	
The heifers of Crete all yearned to sustain that burden	
On their backs; but Pasiphaë	
Proudly rejoiced in her role as bull's mistress, eyed his	295
Cows with envious hate.	
What I say is well-known: not even Crete of the hundred	
Cities, for all her mendacious ways,	
Can deny it. With unpractised hands—they say—the lady	
Plucked leaves and lush grass	300
For this bull, went off with the herds, unrestrained by concern for	
Her husband. A bull won out	
Over Minos himself. Why dress richly, Pasiphaë?	
Your lover's blind to your wealth.	
Why bother with mirrors when the company you're seeking	305
Is upland cattle? Why keep fixing your hair,	
You silly girl? You're no heifer (on <i>that</i> you can trust your mirror)—	
But oh, how you wish you could sprout horns!	
If you love Minos, steer clear of <i>all</i> adulterers; if you	
Choose to cuckold your man, then at least	310
Cuckold him with a man!	
See the queen desert her bower	
For woods and glens, like some god—	
Frenzied maenad: ah, the times she eyed a cow in fury,	
Crying, 'What can my lord ever see	
In <i>that</i> ? Just watch the silly creature frisking before him	315
Down there at pasture—I suppose <i>she</i> thinks	
She's a raving beauty.' With that, she would have the wretched	
Cow dragged from the herd to be yoked to the plough	
Or poleaxed at the altar in a bogus sacrifice, just to	
Let her—a rare pleasure—get her hands	320
On her rival's entrails. The times she slaughtered such heifers	
To appease the gods, and cried, as she held out	
Their guts, 'Go see how he likes you <i>now</i> !' Now she craves to be Io,	
Now Europa: bovine, or bull-borne.	
Yet the herd-leader, taken in by a wooden cow, contrived to	325
Fill her: their offspring betrayed	
Its paternity. Had Aerope restrained her love for Thyestes	
(And to forego even one man	
Is a serious matter), Phoebus would never have turned backwards	
In mid-flight, have driven his steeds	330
And chariot Dawnwards. From Nisus his daughter stole that purple	
Lock—and now fights down	
The mad dogs that swarm from her groin. Agamemnon lived through battles	
On land, and great storms by sea,	
To become his wife's victim. Who's not wept for flame-racked	335

Creüsa, for the children whose bloody death
 Stained Medea's hands? Amyntor's son Phoenix wept tears
 From sightless orbs; fright-maddened horses tore
 Hippolytus limb from limb. Ah Phineus, why blind your
 Innocent sons? On your own head the same 340
 Horror will fall. Each one of these crimes was prompted
 By woman's lust—lust that far
 Outstrips ours in keenness and frenzy. Why doubt that you can conquer
 Any girl in sight? Few indeed
 Will turn you down—and (willing or not) a male proposition 345
 Is something they all enjoy. Draw a blank,
 Rejection brings no danger. But why should you be rejected
 When new thrills delight, when what's not ours
 Has more allure than what is? The harvest's always richer
 In another man's fields, the herd 350
 Of our neighbour has fuller udders.

But first you must get acquainted
 With your quarry's maid—she can help
 In the early stages. Make sure she enjoys the full confidence
 Of her mistress: make sure you can trust
 Her with your secret liaison. Corrupt her with promises, 355
 Corrupt her with prayers. If
 She's willing, you'll get what you want. She'll await the propitious
 Time (like a doctor) when her mistress is in
 A receptive, seducible mood, when she's bursting out all over
 With cheerfulness, like a wheat-crop in rich soil. 360
 When hearts are rejoicing, and have no sorrow to constrict them,
 They're wide open, Venus can steal
 In by persuasive guile. Grim Troy long faced her besiegers,
 But a light-hearted change of mood
 Fell for that troop-gravid horse.

Another time to try her 365
 Is when she's been miffed by a rival. Make it your job
 To ensure she gets her revenge. Prime her maid to egg her on while
 Combing her hair each morning, put an oar in
 To boost Ma'am's plain sailing, sigh to herself, and murmur:
 'What a pity it is you can't just pay him out 370
 With a tit-for-tat,' then talk about *you* in persuasive
 Language, swear you're dying of mad
 Passion. But lose no time, don't let the wind subside or
 The sails drop slack. Fury, like brittle ice,
 Melts with delay. You may ask, does it pay to seduce the 375
 Maid herself? Such a gambit involves great risk.
 Bed makes one girl jealous, takes the edge off another: will she
 Want you for her mistress—or for *her*?
 It can go either way. Though the situation calls for

Bold risks, my advice is, *Don't*. I'm not the sort 380
 To climb precipitous paths, sharp peaks. With me for leader
 No young man will be caught. But if,
 While she carries your letters back and forth, it's not just
 Her zeal but her figure that tickles your fancy, then make
 Mistress first, maid second. Never *begin* your wooing 385
 With the lady's companion. And here's one piece of advice
 (If you trust in my skill at all, if the greedy winds don't
 Blow my words out to sea):
 Lay off—or *make sure of her*. Once she's involved, and guilty,
 There's no longer any fear 390
 That she'll turn informer against you. What's the use of liming
 A bird's wings if it escapes? A loose-netted boar
 That breaks free is no good. Play your fish on the hook she's taken,
 Press home your assault, don't give up till victory's won.*

 But keep such relationships secret: with a secret informer 397
 You'll always know every move your mistress makes.

 It's wrong to suppose that only shipmen and toiling farmers
 Must observe due season. Grain 400
 Cannot always be trusted to the treacherous furrow, nor curving
 Hulls to the green deep; likewise
 It's not always safe to pursue young girls: the occasion
 Will often condition success. Thus, avoid
 Her birthday; and April the First (the feast of Venus 405
 In conjunction with Mars); and when
 The Circus is decorated, not, as before, with gew-gaws
 But with the wealth of kings: never make
 Your attempt at such times—then storms are roughest, the Pleiads
 Sinking horizonwards, or the Kid washed down 410
 Under the waves. Best to sit tight: those who venture
 On the high seas now, limp home
 With a dismembered vessel. Begin on a day of mourning:
 The anniversary of Rome's bloody defeat
 At the Allia—or perhaps on the Jewish sabbath: many 415
 Shops will be shut then. Regard
 Your mistress's birthday with superstitious horror,
 Set a black mark against
 Any day when you have to buy presents. Yet avoid it as you may, she'll
 Collect all the same. Every woman knows just how 420
 To fleece her panting lover. When she's got a spending mood on,

* Lines 395–6 do not appear in two of the better MSS, and are omitted as spurious by some editors. I am in two minds about this verdict, so translate them here:

Then guilty complicity will keep her from betraying you,
 And you will learn of all your mistress says or does.

Some loose-garbed pedlar will come and spread out his wares
 With you sitting by. She'll ask you to look at the stuff, show off your
 Expert knowledge. Kisses will follow. Then
 She'll insist that you buy it, swear it'll satisfy her 425
 For years, say she needs it now, now's a good
 Time to buy it. Tell her you haven't the cash in the house, she'll
 Ask for a note-of-hand—just to make
 You sorry you learnt how to write. There's the birthday-cake gambit,
 A broad hint for presents: she's born x times a year 430
 As the occasion demands. Or she'll come up weeping, pretend she's
 Lost one of her ear-bobs. Such girls
 Are always borrowing things that, once they've had loaned them,
 They never return. Your loss in this sort of case
 Isn't even offset by gratitude. To list the tricks such gold-digging 435
 Tarts employ, I'd require ten mouths, ten tongues.

Let wax pave the way for you, spread out on smooth tablets,
 Let wax go before as witness to your mind—
 Bring her your flattering words, words that ape the lover:
 And remember, whoever you are, to throw in some good 440
 Entreaties. Entreaties are what made Achilles give back Hector's
 Body to Priam; even an angry god
 Is moved by the voice of prayer. Make promises, what's the harm in
 Promising? Here's where anyone can play rich.
 Hope, once entertained, is enduring: a deceptive 445
 Goddess—but useful. Your gift
 Once made, you can be abandoned, and with good reason:
 She'll have fleeced you, past tense, at no
 Loss to herself. But a present withheld breeds expectations:
 That's how farmers, so often, are fooled by a barren field, 450
 That's why the inveterate gambler doubles his losses
 To stave off loss, why the dice-box beckons his hand
 Back again and again. *This the task, this the labour*, to win her
 Gift-free: she'll continue to give
 Lest she lose what she's given already. A persuasive letter's 455
 The thing to lead off with, explore her mind,
 Reconnoitre the landscape. A message scratched on an apple
 Betrayed Cydippe: she was snared by her own words.
 My advice, then, young men of Rome, is to learn the noble
 Advocate's arts—not only to let you defend 460
 Some trembling client: a woman, no less than the populace,
 Elite senator, or grave judge,
 Will surrender to eloquence. Nevertheless, dissemble
 Your powers, avoid long words,
 Don't look too highbrow. Who but a mindless ninny 465
 Declaims to his mistress? An over-lettered style
 Repels girls as often as not. Use ordinary language,

Familiar yet coaxing words—as though
 You were there, in her presence. If she refuses your letter,
 Sends it back unread, persist: 470
 Say you hope she'll read it later. Time breaks stubborn oxen
 To the plough, time teaches a horse
 To accept the bridle. An iron ring's worn by constant
 Friction, the furrowed soil
 Rubs away the curved ploughshare. What is softer than water, 475
 What harder than stone? Yet the soft
 Water-drip hollows hard rock. In time, with persistence,
 You'll conquer Penelope. Troy fell late,
 But fall it did. Suppose she reads your notes, but won't answer?
 Don't press her, just keep up 480
 Your flattering *billets-doux*. The girl who reads letters
 Will reply to them in the end: affairs like these
 Go by degrees and stages. First you may get an angry
 Note saying 'Don't pester me, please.'
 She's really afraid you'll stop: what she wants (but says she doesn't) 485
 Is for you to go on. Press hard, you'll win through in the end.

What else? If she's out, reclining in her litter,
 Make your approach discreet,
 And—just to fox the sharp ears of those around you—
 Cleverly riddle each phrase 490
 With ambiguous subtleties. If she's taking a leisurely
 Stroll down the colonnade, then you stroll there too—
 Vary your pace to hers, march ahead, drop behind her,
 Dawdling and brisk by turns. Be bold,
 Dodge in round the columns between you, brush your person 495
 Lingeringly past hers. You must never fail
 To attend the theatre when she does, gaze at her beauty—
 From the shoulders up she's time
 Most delectably spent, a feast for adoring glances,
 For the eloquence of eyebrows, the speaking sign. 500
 Applaud when some male dancer struts on as the heroine,
 Cheer for each lover's role.
 When she leaves, leave too—but sit there as long as she does:
 Waste time at your mistress's whim.

Don't torture your hair, though, with curling-irons: don't pumice 505
 Your legs into smoothness. Leave *that*
 To Mother Cybele's votaries, ululating in chorus
 With their Phrygian modes. Real men
 Shouldn't primp their good looks. When Theseus abducted Ariadne
 No pins held up *his* locks; 510
 Hippolytus was no dandy, yet Phaedra loved him; Adonis,
 That creature of woodland, allured

A goddess. Keep pleasantly clean, take exercise, work up an outdoor
 Tan; make quite sure that your toga fits
 And doesn't show spots; don't lace your shoes too tightly 515
 Or ignore any rusty buckles, or slop
 Around in too large a fitting. Don't let some incompetent barber
 Ruin your looks: both hair and beard demand
 Expert attention. Keep your nails pared, and dirt-free;
 Don't let those long hairs sprout 520
 In your nostrils, make sure your breath is never offensive,
 Avoid the rank male stench
 That wrinkles noses. Beyond this is for wanton women—
 Or any half-man who wants to attract men.

Lo! Bacchus calls to his poet: Bacchus too helps lovers, 525
 Fosters that flame with which he burns himself—
 As Ariadne discovered, ranging the unfamiliar
 Sea-strand of Naxos, crazed
 Out of her mind, fresh-roused from sleep, in an ungirt
 Robe, blonde hair streaming loose, barefoot, 530
 Calling 'Ah cruel Theseus!' to the deaf waves, tears coursing
 Down her innocent-tender cheeks.
 She wept, she besought, yet contrived to remain appealing
 Despite all: not even those tears
 Could imperil such beauty. Hands beating her soft bosom, 535
 'He's gone,' she cried, 'he's betrayed me: what, ah what
 Will become of me now?' Then, presto, the whole shore echoed
 With frenzied drumming, the clash
 Of cymbals. She broke off, speechless, fainted
 In terror, the blood fled 540
 From her pale inert limbs, as wild-tressed Bacchanals, wanton
 Satyrs, the god's forerunners, appeared,
 With drunken old Silenus, scarce fit to ride his swaybacked
 Ass, hands clutching its mane
 As he chased the Maenads—the Maenads would flee and rally— 545
 A dizzy rider, whipping his steed ahead
 Till he pitched off the long-eared ass on his head, and the satyrs
 All shouted: 'Up with you, Dad!
 Come on up there!' And then came the god, his chariot grape-clustered,
 Paired tigers padding on as he shook 550
 The golden reins. Poor girl: lost voice, lost colour—lost Theseus.
 Thrice she tried to run, thrice stood frozen with fear,
 Shivering, like the thin breeze-rustled cornstalk,
 Or osiers in a marsh. 'I am here
 For you,' the god told her. 'My love will prove more faithful. 555
 No need for fear. You shall be
 Wife to Bacchus, take the sky as your dowry, be seen there
 As a star, the Cretan Crown, a familiar guide

To wandering vessels.' Down he sprang from his chariot, lest the
 Girl take fright at the tigers; set his foot 560
 On the shore, then gathered her up in his arms—no resistance—
 And bore her away. No trouble for gods to do
 Whatever they please. Loud cheers, a riotous wedding: Bacchus
 And his bride were soon bedded down.
 So when the blessings of Bacchus are set out before you 565
 At dinner, with a lady to share your couch,
 Then pray the Lord of Darkness and Nocturnal Orgies
 To stop the wine going to your head!
 Here double-talk is the vogue: lace your conversation
 With ambiguous phrases designed to make the girl 570
 Feel they're specially meant for her. Write flatteries on the table
 In wine, let her read herself your heart's
 Mistress: gaze deep in her eyes with open passion—
 One silent glance can speak
 Whole volumes. Make sure you're the first to snatch the cup that 575
 Her lips have touched: drink from where she has drunk;
 And if there's some piece of food she's fingered, take it,
 Brushing her hand as you reach out.
 Let it be your concern, too, to please your lady's escort—
 He'll be more use to you as a friend. 580
 When you're dicing to settle the drinking-order, let him take your
 Place, give him the garland off your head,
 Never mind if he's placed below you or with you, still let him
 Be served first every time, defer to his words.*
 I'll give you specific advice, now, on just what limits
 You should set to your drinking. Keep mind and feet 590
 Steady. Above all, avoid drunken quarrels, don't get
 Into a fight too fast.
 His stupid swilling killed off Eurytion the Centaur;
 Wine over dinner was rather meant to promote
 Fun and games. So if you've a voice, then sing; or if your movements 595
 Are graceful, dance. Please with whatever gifts
 You possess to give pleasure. And though real drunkenness can harm you,
 To feign it may prove useful. Let your devious tongue
 Stutter and slur: then, however licentious your words or
 Actions, they'll be blamed on the wine. 'A health 600
 To the lady,' you'll cry, 'a health to the man she sleeps with!'
 —While silently wishing her present partner in hell.
 But when the tables are cleared, and the guests departing,
 And in the confusion you perceive your chance

* Lines 585–8 are a spurious (and moralizing) insertion by some post-Ovidian hand:

It's a safe, well-trodden path to deceive in friendship's name: safe
 And well-trodden perhaps, but still
 The path of guilt. That way a collector collects more
 Than is due him, looks to care for more than his charge.

To make contact, then join the crowd, discreetly approach her 605
 On the way out, let your fingers brush against
 Her side, touch her foot with yours. Now's the time for chatting
 Her up, no clodhopping bashfulness—the bold
 Are favoured by Chance and Venus. Don't think that your eloquence
 Must conform to poetic canons. Just pitch in 610
 And you'll find yourself fluent enough. You must play the lover,
 Ape heartache with words, use every subtle device
 To compel her belief. It's not hard—what woman doesn't believe she's
 A natural object for love, or, however plain,
 Isn't thrilled by her own appearance? Besides, very often 615
 That passion a gallant feigns in his opening round
 Will become the real thing. (So, girls, show more kindness to pretenders:
 True love may spring tomorrow from today's
 False declaration.) Press on, undermine them with devious
 Flatteries: so a stream will eat away 620
 Its overhanging bank. Never weary of praising
 Her face, her hair, her slim fingers, her tiny feet.
 Even the chaste like having their good looks published,
 Even virgins are taken up with their own
 Cute figures. Why does it still bother Juno and Pallas 625
 That they didn't win first prize in the Phrygian woods?
 When it's praised, then Juno's peacock displays its plumage;
 If you stare without comment—no show.
 Even racehorses, back in the paddock, respond with pleasure
 To a combed mane, a pat on the neck. 630

Don't be shy about promising: it's promises girls are undone by;
 Invoke any gods you please
 To endorse your performance. Jupiter smiles from heaven
 On foresworn lovers, lets all their perjuries blow
 Away unrequited. (*He* used to swear falsely, by Styx, to Juno— 635
 So looks now with favour on others who do the same.)
 The existence of gods is expedient: let us therefore assume it,
 With gifts of incense and wine on their antique hearths—
 No carefree repose, like a drowsy siesta, keeps them
 Remote after all. So, lead an innocent life: 640
 Divinity's nigh. Honour bonds, don't embezzle deposits,
 Avoid murder and fraud. If you're wise
 Gull only girls, they're no danger. In this one deception
 It's good faith that ought to make you blush.
 They're cheats, so cheat *them*: most are dumb and unscrupulous: let them 645
 Fall into the traps they've set themselves.
 Egypt had drought for nine years once, no rain to quicken
 Her harvest-fields. Then Thrasius the sage
 Told King Busiris the gods could be propitiated
 With a stranger's spilt blood. 650

Busiris replied: 'You shall be the gods' first victim, you the
Stranger who brings water to Egypt's soil.'

So Perillus, the inventor of Phalaris' brazen bull, was

The first, unlucky man, to roast in his own

Cruel contrivance. Both kings did right. No fairer statute

655

Than that which condemns the artificer of death

To perish by his art. So let perjuries gull the perjured,

Let Woman smart from the wounds she first dealt out!

Tears, too, will help: with tears you'll shift adamant. Flaunt wet

Cheeks—if you can—for *her* to see:

660

But if tears won't come (and they sometimes fail in a crisis)

Just wipe a moist hand across your eyes!

What sensible man will not intersperse his coaxing

With kisses? Even if she doesn't kiss back,

Still force on regardless! She may struggle, cry 'Naughty!'

665

Yet she wants to be overcome. Just take care

Not to bruise her tender lips with such hard-snatched kisses,

Don't give her a chance to protest

You're too rough. Those who grab their kisses, but not what follows,

Deserve to lose all they've gained. How short were you

670

Of the ultimate goal after all your kissing? That was

Gaucheness, not modesty, I'm afraid . . .

It's all right to use force—force of *that* sort goes down well with

The girls: what in fact they love to yield

They'd often rather have stolen. Rough seduction

675

Delights them, the audacity of near-rape

Is a compliment—so the girl who *could* have been forced, yet somehow

Got away unscathed, may feign delight, but in fact

Feels sadly let down. Hilaira and Phoebe, both ravished,

Both fell for their ravishers. Then there's another tale,

680

Well-known, but well worth retelling, which recounts how Achilles

Made a girl on Scyros his:

It was after the goddess had won that beauty-competition

Against her peers on Ida, and had given her own

Reward to Paris; after Priam had welcomed his foreign

685

Daughter-in-law, and a Greek wife came to dwell

Within Troy's walls. All swore allegiance to the injured

Husband. So one man's hurt became

A national cause. But Achilles—to his shame, were the act not prompted

By a mother's prayers—concealed his manhood beneath

690

A girl's long robe. What's this? Wool-spinning's not your business.

Achilles: it's quite another of Pallas' arts

Through which you'll find fame. What have you to do with baskets?

Your arm should support a shield. Why does the hand

That will one day slay Hector carry a skein? Cast aside your spindle

695

With its laborious threading: the Pelian spear
Is what *you* should wield.

The king's daughter, Deidamia,

Who shared his room soon proved
That manhood through rape. Her seduction must have been forceful,
But to *be* forced was what she desired. 700

'Don't go,' she cried, when Achilles was hastening from her,
Distaff forgotten, a warrior under arms.

*Where's that violence now? Why coax the perpetrator
Of your rape to remain, Deidamia?* If you take
The initiative, it's true, you may feel some embarrassment: better 705
To let *him*—and more fun when you submit.

Any lover who waits for his girl to make the running
Has too much faith in his own

Irresistible charms. The first approaches, the pleading,
Are the man's concern: *her* place 710

Is to hear his smooth line with kindness. To win her, ask her:
She's dying to be asked. Just provide a good excuse

For her to fulfil your wishes. Jupiter wooed those antique
Heroines as a suppliant. No girl seduced

The Almighty. But if you find that your pleading induces 715
Puffed-up disdain, then ease off,

Take a step back. Many women adore the elusive,
Hate over-eagerness. So, play hard to get,

Stop boredom developing. And don't let your entreaties
Sound too confident of possession. Insinuate sex 720

Camouflaged as friendship. I've seen ultra-stubborn creatures
Fooled by this gambit, the switch from companion to stud.

For sailors a pale complexion is inappropriate,

They should be tanned and dark,
Fetchingly weatherbeaten; so should husbandmen 725

Who spend their time out of doors

With plough and harrow; so should the champion athlete—
If *they're* white, it looks all wrong.

But let every lover be pale: here's the proper complexion
For lovers; this gambit, please note, 730

Has worked on every occasion. Pale was Orion, roaming
The woodlands, pining for Side; pale

Daphnis (ah, unkind Naiad!). Look lean and haggard
As proof of your passion, don't baulk

At hooding your lustrous curls. Sleepless nights, the pangs and worry 735
Of consuming love—these will reduce young men

To a thin nothing. If you mean to achieve your purpose

Be an object of pity, so that the passers-by

Will say at once, 'He's in love'.

Now should I complain, or warn you, 740

That no one now distinguishes right from wrong?

Friendship and honour are empty words, it's not safe to praise your
 Girl to a friend—if he believes what you say
 He'll be in there himself. You may ask, 'Did Patroclus cuckold
 Achilles? Wasn't Phaedra perfectly chaste 745
 With Pirihoüs? Didn't Pylades love Hermione as Apollo
 Loved Pallas, or Castor his twin?'
 If anyone nurses *that* hope, he'll believe that apples grow on
 Tamarisks, that honey's to be found in midstream.
 The base alone gives pleasure; men seek only their own enjoyment,
 And find that sweet when it springs from another's pain. 750
 How outrageous, when it's not their enemies that lovers
 Most need to fear! Nowadays you'll be safe enough
 If you shun those you trust. Cousins, brothers, loyal comrades—
 Here's where your real trouble lies.
 One word more before I stop. The characters of women 755
 All differ. To capture a thousand hearts demands
 A thousand devices. Some soils are better for olives,
 Some for vines, or for wheat: you can't
 Raise them all in one field. Hearts have as many changing
 Moods as the face has expressions. A wise man 760
 Will adapt to countless fashions, will resolve himself, like Proteus,
 Into water, now lion, now tree,
 Now bristling boar. Some fish are trawled, some netted,
 Some caught with line and hook:
 And don't try the same technique on every age-group, 765
 An old doe will spot the trap
 From much further off. If a simpleton finds you too highbrow
 Or a prude over-coarse, they'll feel
 Self-distrust and dismay. That's how the girl who shies off decent
 Lovers will cheapen herself by giving in 770
 To some low cad.

This concludes the first part of my venture—
 Now throw out the anchor, let my craft ride secure!

BOOK 2

Cry hurrah, and hurrah again, for a splendid triumph—
 The quarry I sought has fallen into my toils.
 Each happy lover now rates my verses higher
 Than Homer's or Hesiod's, awards them the palm
 Of victory. He's as cheerful as Paris was, sailing away from 5
 Warlike Sparta, the guest who stole a bride,
 Or Pelops, the stranger, the winner of Hippodameia
 After that chariot-race.

Why hurry, young man? Your ship's still in mid-passage,
 And the harbour I seek is far away. 10
 Through my verses, it's true, you may have *acquired* a mistress,
 But that's not enough. If my art
 Caught her, my art must keep her. To guard a conquest's
 As tricky as making it. There was luck in the chase,
 But *this* task will call for skill. If ever I needed support from 15
 Venus and Son, and Erato—the Muse
 Erotic by name—it's now, for my too-ambitious project
 To relate some techniques that might restrain
 That fickle young globetrotter, Love. He's winged and flighty,
 Hard to pin down. Just so 20
 Minos might block every line of escape, yet his guest still found a
 Daring way out—by air.
 When Daedalus had built his labyrinth to imprison
 The bull-man, man-bull, conceived through a queen's guilt,
 He said: 'Most just Minos, put a term, now, to my exile, 25
 Let my native soil receive
 My ashes. Since unkind fate would not let me live there,
 Grant me at least to die
 In my own country. Release the boy, if you hold his father's
 Services cheap; spare me if you will not spare 30
 My son.' So much he said—but might have gone on pleading
 For ever in vain: the king
 Would not grant his request. When Daedalus perceived this,
Now, now is the time, he told himself, *to deploy*
All your skill and craft. Minos rules earth, rules ocean: 35
No escape by sea or land. All that remains
Is the sky. So, through the sky we'll seek our passage—
God in high heaven, forgive
Such a project! I do not aspire to touch your starry dwellings:
This is the only way I have to escape 40
My master. Were there a way by Styx, through Stygian waters
We'd swim to freedom. I must devise new laws
For human nature. Necessity often mothers invention.
 Who would have believed man could ever fly?
 But Daedalus fashioned birds' oarage, trimmed it with feathers 45
 Bonded the flimsy fabric with linen thread,
 Melted wax to glue wings in place. Very soon his novel
 Craftsman's task was achieved:
 Excitedly the boy studied wings and wax, not guessing 50
 The gear had been made for his own
 Shoulders and arms, till his father said: 'These are the craft which
 Must bear us home, with their aid
 We must escape from Minos. Though he's blocked all other
 Routes to us, he cannot master the air—as you 55
 Can do, through my device. But take care, don't go stargazing

At belted Orion or the Bear:
 Take these pinions, fly behind me: I'll go ahead, you
 Follow my lead. That way
 You'll be safe. If we fly too close to the sun, through the upper 60
 Air, then the wax will be softened by the heat;
 If we stoop too low seaward, then our thrashing pinions
 Will grow waterlogged from the spray.
 So, my son, set a middle course—and watch out for turbulent
 Air-currents: spread your wings
 To the steady breeze, go with it.' While he talked, he was fitting 65
 The boy's gear, showing him how to move
 Like a mother bird with her fledglings. Then he fixed his own harness
 To his shoulders, nervously poised himself for this strange
 New journey; paused on the brink of take-off, embraced his
 Son, couldn't fight back his tears. 70
 They'd found a hilltop—above the plain, but no mountain—
 And from this they took off
 On their hapless flight. Daedalus flexed his wings, glanced back at
 His son's, held a steady course. The new
 Element bred delight. Fear forgotten, Icarus flew more 75
 Boldly, with daring skill. The pair
 Were glimpsed by an angler, line bobbing, who at the sight of them
 Dropped his rod in surprise. They left
 Naxos and Paros behind them, skirted Delos, beloved of
 Apollo, flew on east: to the north 80
 Lay Samos, southward Lebynthos, Calýmne with its shady
 Forests, and Astypálaea, set amid fish-rich shoals.
 Then the boy, made over-reckless by youthful daring, abandoned
 His father, soared aloft
 Too close to the sun: the wax melted, the ligatures 85
 Flew apart, his flailing arms had no hold
 On the thin air. From dizzy heaven he gazed down seaward
 In terror. Fright made the scene go black
 Before his eyes. No wax, wings gone, a thrash of naked
 Arms, a shuddering plunge 90
 Down through the void, a scream—'Father, father, I'm falling—'
 Cut off as he hit the waves.
 His unhappy father, a father no longer, cried: 'Icarus!
 Icarus, where are you? In what part of the sky
 Do you fly now?'—then saw wings littering the water. 95
 Earth holds his bones; the Icarian Sea, his name.
 So Minos failed to clip the wings of a mortal—yet here am
 I now, planning to pin down the winged god.
 Delusions abound. Don't mess with Thessalian witchcraft—
 That love-charm torn from the brow 100
 Of a foal is no good. Not all Medea's herbs, not every
 Spell and magical cantrip will suffice

To keep love alive—else Circe had held Ulysses,
 And Medea her Jason, by their arts alone.
 Giving girls aphrodisiac drugs, too, is useless—and dangerous: 105
 Drugs can affect the brain, induce madness. Avoid
 All such nasty tricks. To be loved you must show yourself lovable—
 Something good looks alone
 Can never achieve. You may be handsome as Homer's Nireus,
 Or young Hylas, snatched by those bad 110
 Naiads; but all the same, to avoid a surprise desertion
 And to keep your girl, it's best you have gifts of mind
 In addition to physical charms. Beauty's fragile, the passing
 Years diminish its substance, eat it away.
 Violets and bell-mouthed lilies do not bloom for ever, 115
 Hard thorns are all that's left of the blown rose.
 So with you, my handsome youth: soon wrinkles will furrow
 Your body; soon, too soon, your hair turn grey.
 Then build an enduring mind, add that to your beauty:
 It alone will last till the flames 120
 Consume you. Keep your wits sharp, explore the liberal
 Arts, win a mastery over Greek
 As well as Latin. Ulysses was eloquent, not handsome—
 Yet he filled sea-goddesses' hearts
 With aching passion. How often Calypso lamented 125
 His haste to be off, swore the sea
 Was too rough for rowing! Again and again she'd beg him
 To recount Troy's fate, made him find fresh words
 For the same old tale. They'd pace the shore; pretty Calypso
 Would say: 'Now tell me how King Rhesus met 130
 His bloody end.' Then Ulysses would take the stick he was holding
 And sketch in the wet sand whatever scene
 She'd demanded. 'Here's Troy,' he'd say, making walls of shingle.
 'And here's the river. Let's call this bit my camp.
 This was the plain—' he levelled it—'where we butchered Dolon, 135
 The spy-by-night, as he dreamed
 Of Achilles' horses. There stood the tents of Rhesus;
 I rode back home that night
 On the King's captured steeds—' As he spoke, a sudden breaker
 Washed away Rhesus, his camp, and Troy itself. 140
 Then the goddess exclaimed: 'You'd trust *these* waves for your voyage?
 Look at the great names they've destroyed!
 So don't rely too much on looks, they can prove deceptive
 Whoever you are: have something more than physique!
 Nothing works on a mood like tactful tolerance: harshness 145
 Provokes hatred, makes nasty rows.
 We detest the hawk and the wolf, those natural hunters,
 Always preying on timid flocks;

- But the gentle swallow goes safe from man's snares, we fashion
 Little turreted houses for doves. 150
- Keep clear of all quarrels, sharp-tongued recriminations—
 Love's sensitive, needs to be fed
 With gentle words. Leave nagging to wives and husbands,
 Let *them*, if they want, think it a natural law,
 A permanent state of feud. Wives thrive on wrangling, 155
 That's their dowry. A mistress should always hear
 What she wants to be told. You don't share one bed by legal
 Fiat, with you love substitutes for law.
 Use tender blandishments, language that caresses
 The ear, make her glad you came. 160
 I'm not here as preceptor of loving to the wealthy; a suitor
 With gifts doesn't need my skills—
 Anyone attractive who says 'Here's something for you,'
 Has genius of his own. To such a one
 I give place: he's got my tricks beat. I'm the poor man's poet, 165
 Was poor myself as a lover, couldn't afford
 Gifts, so spun words. Poor suitors must woo with caution,
 Watch their tongues, bear much that the rich
 Would never put up with. I recall how once in anger
 I pulled my girl's hair. The days I lost through that 170
 Little outburst! I don't think I tore her dress, I wasn't conscious
 Of doing so—but *she* said I did, and the bill
 Was paid for at my expense. Avoid (if you're wise) your teacher's
 Errors, shun what may cost you dear.
 Fight Parthians, but keep peace with a civilized mistress, 175
 Have fun together, do all that induces love.
- If the girl's curt and unreceptive to your wooing,
 Persist, be obdurate: the time will come
 When she's more welcoming. Go with the bough, you'll bend it;
 Use brute force, it'll snap. 180
 Go with the current: that's how to swim across rivers—
 Fighting upstream's no good.
 Go easy with lions or tigers if you aim to tame them;
 The bull gets inured to the plough by slow degrees.
 Was there ever a girl more prickly than Atalanta? 185
 Yet tough as she was, she went down
 Before a man's prowess, Milanion, roaming the forest,
 Kept bewailing his lot, and the girl's
 Unkindness. She made him hump hunting-nets on his back, he
 Was for ever spearing wild boars; 190
 His wounded flesh learnt the strength of Hylaeus the Centaur's
 Taut bow—yet his keener pangs
 Came from another bow, Cupid's. I'm not suggesting
 You have to go lugging nets up mountain glens

- Or play the hunter, or bare your breast to flying arrows— 195
 A cautious lover will find the rules of my art
 Undemanding enough. So, yield if she shows resistance:
 That way you'll win in the end. Just be sure to play
 The part she allots you. Censure the things she censures,
 Endorse her endorsements, echo her every word, 200
 Pro or con, and laugh whenever she laughs; remember,
 If she weeps, to weep too: take your cue
 From her every expression. Suppose she's playing a board-game,
 Then throw the dice carelessly, move
 Your pieces all wrong. At knucklebones, when you beat her, 205
 Exact no forfeit, roll low throws yourself
 As often as you can manage. If you're playing halma, permit her
 Glass piece to take yours. Open up
 Her parasol, hold it over her when she's out walking,
 Clear her a path through the crowd. 210
 When she's on her chaise-lounge, make haste to find a footstool
 For those dainty feet of hers, help her on and off
 With her slippers. At times she'll feel cold: then (though you're shivering
 Yourself) warm her tiny hand
 In your bosom. Don't jib at a slavish task like holding 215
 Her mirror: slavish or not, such attentions please.
 When his stepmother Hera tired of sending him monsters
 To vanquish, then the hero who won a place
 In the sky he'd formerly shouldered took to the distaff
 And basket, spun wool among Ionian girls. 220
 If Hercules, then, obeyed *his* mistress's orders, will you
 Flinch from enduring what he endured?
 She says you've a date in town? Be sure you always get there
 Ahead of time: don't give her up
 Till it's *really* late. If she asks you to meet her somewhere, 225
 Put everything off, elbow your way through the crowd
 At the double. When she comes home, late at night, from a party,
 You still must attend, like her slave,
 If she summons you. It's the same when she's in the country:
 Love detests laggards. You've no transport? Walk. 230
 Don't be put off by bad weather, or a heatwave,
 Or snowdrifts blocking your road.
- Love is a species of warfare. Slack troopers, go elsewhere!
 It takes more than cowards to guard
 These standards. Night-duty in winter, long route-marches, every 235
 Hardship, all forms of suffering: these await
 The recruit who expects a soft option. You'll often be out in
 Cloudbursts, and bivouack on the bare
 Ground. We know how Apollo pastured Admetus' cattle,
 Dossed down in a herdsman's hut. What mere 240

- Mortal's too good for conditions a god accepted? Is lasting
 Love your ambition? Then put away all pride.
 The simple, straightforward way in may be denied you,
 Doors bolted, shut in your face— 245
 So be ready to slip down from the roof through a lightwell,
 Or sneak in by an upper-floor window. She'll be glad
 To know you're risking your neck, and for her sake: that will offer
 Any mistress sure proof of your love.
 Leander might, often enough, have endured Hero's absence—
 But swam over to show her how he felt. 250
 Don't think it beneath you to cultivate madam's houseboys
 And her more important maids:
 Greet each one by name (the gesture costs you nothing),
 Clasp their coarse hands in yours—all part of the game.
- On Good Luck Day, if you're asked for a present, even 255
 By a slave, then give: the expense
 Will be minimal. See that the maids, too, get a handout
 On *their* day (the day those Gauls
 Were figged by some dressed-up slaveys). It pays, believe me,
 To keep in with the servants—especially those who watch 260
 Her front-door or bedroom entrance.
- Don't give your mistress costly
- Presents: let them be small, but chosen with skill
 And discretion. At harvest-time, when fields are full, boughs heavy,
 Send round a basket of fruit—
 Say it came from your country estate (though you really bought it 265
 At some smart city shop). Give her grapes,
 Or the chestnuts to which Amaryllis was so devoted—
 No, not chestnuts, she's off them these days:
 Much too cheap. Why not try a poulterer's hoop of thrushes
 By way of remembrance? (It's shameful to use such gifts 270
 In the hope of a death, to bribe the elderly or barren:
 I've not time for those who give presents a bad name.)
 Would you be well advised to send her love-poems?
 Poetry, I fear, is held in small esteem.
 Girls praise a poem, but go for expensive presents: 275
 Any illiterate oaf can catch their eye
 Provided he's rich. Today is truly the Golden
 Age: gold buys honours, gold
 Procures love. If Homer dropped by—with all the Muses,
 But empty-handed—he'd be shown the door. 280
 There *are* a few cultured girls (not many, it's true), and others
 Who'd like to be cultured, but aren't;
 Flatter any of these with poems: a bravura declamation
 Even of trash—this will suffice to win

Their approval. Clever or stupid, they'll take a poem fashioned
In the small hours, for *them*, as a cute little gift. 285

Make your mistress ask as a favour for what you intended,
All along, to do yourself
In the way of self-interest. You've promised manumission
To one slave? See that he begs it; first, from her. 290

You plan to spare another in his flogging, or the chain-gang?
Then put her in your debt for a 'change of heart'
That never existed. The benefit's yours, give her the credit,
Waste not want not, while she
Plays the Lady Bountiful. You're anxious to keep your mistress? 295

Convince her she's knocked you all of a heap
With her stunning looks. If it's purple she's wearing, praise purple;
When she's in a silk dress, say silk
Suits her best of all; if her mantle's gold-embroidered
Say she's dearer than gold to you; if tweeds 300

Take her fancy, back tweeds. She's in her slip? She inflames you
(Tell her) with passion—but ask, at the same time,
Very shyly, 'Aren't you cold?' Compliment the way she's parted
Or curled her hair. Admire
Her singing voice, her gestures as she dances, 305

Cry 'Encore!' when she stops. You can even praise
Her performance in bed, her talent for love-making—
Spell out what turned you on.
Though she may show fiercer in action than any Medusa,
Her lover will always describe her as kind 310

And gentle. But take care not to give yourself away while
Making such tongue-in-cheek compliments, don't allow
Your expression to ruin the message. Art's most effective
When concealed. Detection discredits you for good.

Often in early autumn, when the year's at its sweetest, 315
When grapes glow purple and full,

One day we'll be chilled to the bone, the next get heat-exhaustion,
Our bodies made listless by the changing air.
Let's hope your girl keeps well—but if this unhealthy
Season turns her sickly, sends her to bed, 320

Then let her see, beyond doubt, how she's loved and cherished,
Then sow your seed: you'll reap a bumper crop
When the time is ripe. Bear with her fretful sickness,
Attend in person to all she'll let you do;

Let her see you weeping, comfort her with kisses 325
Day in, day out; let her parched

Lips drink your tears. Invent cheerful dreams to tell her,
Make vows galore—and all of them aloud.

Bring round some old crone to purify bed and bedroom,
 Eggs and sulphur clutched in her tremulous hands. 330
 All this will be proof of your willing care: such tactics
 Have often led to a legacy. But don't
 Let your services risk incurring the invalid's displeasure—
 Sedulous zeal should know its proper bounds.
 Never restrict her diet, never make her drink unpleasant 335
 Medicines: leave your rival to deal with such things.

Remember, the wind you spread your sails to when leaving
 Harbour should not be used out on the high
 Seas: let your young love, fancy free, gather strength through
 Experience. Nourish it well, in time 340
 It will grow steadfast. The bull you now fear began as
 The calf you stroked; the tree
 Beneath which you recline was once a sapling. A river's
 Small beginnings swell with progression, embrace
 Many confluent waters. Get her accustomed to you: 345
 Habit's the key, spare no pains till that's achieved.
 Let her always see you around, always hear you talking,
 Show her your face night and day.
 When you're confident you'll be missed, when your absence
 Seems sure to cause her regret, 350
 Then give her some respite: a field improves when fallow,
 Parched soil soaks up the rain.
 Demophoön's presence gave Phyllis no more than mild excitement;
 It was his sailing caused arson in her heart.
 Penelope was racked by crafty Ulysses' absence, 355
 Protesilaus, abroad, made Laodameia burn.
 Short partings do best, though: time wears out affections,
 The absent love fades, a new one takes its place.
 With Menelaus away, Helen's disinclination for sleeping
 Alone led her into her guest's 360
 Warm bed at night. Were you crazy, Menelaus?
 Why go off leaving your wife
 With a stranger in the house? Do you trust doves to falcons,
 Full sheepfolds to mountain wolves?
 Here Helen's not at fault, the adulterer's blameless— 365
 He did no more than you, or any man else,
 Would do yourself. By providing place and occasion
 You precipitated the act. What else did she do
 But act on your clear advice? Husband gone; this stylish stranger
 Here on the spot; too scared to sleep alone— 370
 Oh, Helen wins my acquittal, the blame's her husband's:
 All *she* did was take advantage of a man's
 Human complaisance. And yet, more savage than the tawny
 Boar in his rage, as he tosses the maddened dogs

- On lightning tusks, or a lioness suckling her unweaned
Cubs, or the tiny adder crushed 375
- By some careless foot, is a woman's wrath, when some rival
Is caught in the bed *she* shares. Her feelings show
On her face. Decorum's flung to the wind, a maenadic
Frenzy grips her, she rushes headlong off 380
- After fire and steel. Deserted, barbarian Medea
Avenged her marital wrongs
On Jason by killing their children—like Procne the swallow,
Another ruthless mother, breast stained red
With blood. Such acts destroy the most strongly bonded 385
- Passions: all prudent men should avoid
Set-tos of this sort. Such a ruling, though, won't condemn you
(God forbid!) to one girl alone. No bride can expect
That degree of devotion. Have fun, but play it discreetly—
Don't broadcast your intrigues 390
- As a boost for your ego. Don't make regular assignations,
Don't give X presents that Y might recognize.
Don't always meet in the same place: the lady may catch you
If you haunt the milieux that she knows—
And whenever you write, make sure all previous letters 395
- Have been erased from your tablets: many girls read
More than was ever sent them. Venus, when affronted,
Hits back, inflicts on you
All that she suffered. So long as Agamemnon was faithful,
Clytemnestra stayed chaste. It was her husband's crimes 400
- Turned her to the bad. She'd heard how Chryses, sacerdotal
Fillet on head and laurel in hand, had failed
To win back his daughter. She'd heard the sad tale of abducted
Briseis, knew how shameful delay
Had prolonged the war. Yet all this was mere hearsay: Priam's daughter 405
- Cassandra she'd *seen*, the conqueror shamefully caught
By his own captive. It was then she welcomed Thyestes' son to
Her heart and bed, avenged her husband's ill deed.
- Should your carefully camouflaged actions he brought not notwithstanding
To light, then deny them still, through thick and thin; 410
- Don't be over-subservient, don't flatter her more than usual—
Such traits are clear proof of guilt.
Go to it in bed: that's the one way you'll get round her,
With cocksmanship so fine it *has* to disprove 415
- Any earlier peccadillo. Some advise taking aphrodisiac
Herbal concoctions—they're poison, believe you me.
Some crush up pepper with nettleseed, an urticant mixture,
Or blend yellow camomile in vintage wine;
But the goddess worshipped high on Eryx's leafy mountain
Won't let her joys be forced this way— 420

Try white Megarian onions, and salacious colewort
 Picked from your kitchen-garden; eat eggs;
 Enrich your diet with Hymettus honey, with the needled
 Pine-tree's delectable nuts. 425
 Why digress on such hocus-pocus, Muse? I must guide my chariot
 Straight down the innermost lane,
 Grazing the rail. Just now, at my urging, you were ready
 To keep your affairs a secret. Now change tack
 —At my urging—and publish them. Don't chide me for fickle 430
 Impulses: no ship is always blown
 By the same prevailing wind. We veer to every quarter
 As the breeze fills our sails. Watch how
 A charioteer will handle his horses, first letting them gallop,
 Then skilfully reining them in. 435
 Some women just don't react well to timid complaisance:
 If there's no competition in sight
 Their love wanes. Success will often breed presumption,
 It's hard to keep your head
 Through a run of good luck. You've seen the fire that smoulders 440
 Down to nothing, grows a crown of pale ash
 Over its hidden embers (yet a sprinkling of sulphur
 Will suffice to rekindle the flame)?
 So with the heart. It grows torpid from lack of worry,
 Needs a sharp stimulus to elicit love. 445
 Get her anxious about you, reheat her tepid passions,
 Tell her your guilty secrets, watch her blanch. 445
 Thrice fortunate that man, lucky past calculation,
 Who can make some poor injured girl
 Torture herself over him, lose voice, go pale, pass out when
 The unwelcome news reaches her. Ah, may I 450
 Be the one whose hair she tears out in her fury, the one whose
 Soft cheeks she rips with her nails,
 Whom she sees, eyes glaring, through a rain of tears; without whom,
 Try as she will, she cannot live!
 How long (you may ask) should you leave her lamenting her wrong? A little 455
 While only, lest rage gather strength
 Through procrastination. By then you should have her sobbing
 All over your chest, your arms tight round her neck.
 You want peace? Give her kisses, make love to the girl while she's crying—
 That's the only way to melt her angry mood. 460
 When she's been raging at you, when she seems utterly hostile,
 Then is the time to try
 An alliance in bed. She'll come through. Bed's where harmony dwells when
 The fighting's done: that's the place
 Where loving-kindness was born. The doves that lately fought now 465
 Call softly, bill and coo.

The world at first was mere mass, confused and patternless, one great
 Mingled vista: stars, earth, sea. But soon
 Heaven was set above earth, land ringed with water,
 And the void withdrew to its own place. 470
 Birds made their home in the air, beasts in the forest:
 Deep underwater, fish lurked.
 Mankind was nomadic then, went wandering through an empty
 Landscape, mere muscular brutes
 Whose home was the woodland, who ate grass, used leaves for bedding, 475
 Went solitary, long avoided their own kind.
 What softened those fierce hearts? Voluptuous pleasure
 When a man and a woman stopped
 In the same place. They found what to do by themselves. No teacher
 Was needed. Venus saw the sweet game through 480
 Without subtle trimmings. The bird has his mate, the fish will
 Find a partner out in the deep,
 Hind follows stag, serpent tangles with serpent,
 Dog mounts random dog, the ewe
 Thrills to be covered, bulls rouse their heifers, the snub-nosed 485
 She-goat's back sustains
 Her rank male partner. Mares are driven to frenzy,
 Cross rivers in hot pursuit
 Of their stallions. So get moving with this potent medicine
 When your lady's angry: nothing else will relieve 490
 Her fierce distress, this dose surpasses even Machaon's
 Drugs: if you've been unfaithful, this will make your peace.

 As I was reciting these lines, Apollo abruptly
 Materialized beside me, thrumming a chord
 On his gilded lyre, bay in hand, bay wreathed about his sacred 495
 Hair (to poets he will sometimes appear
 In visible form). 'Preceptor,' he told me, 'of wanton
 Love, come, lead your disciples to my shrine,
 Show them the world-famous sign, that brief commandment:
 Know yourself. Only with true 500
 Self-knowledge will a man love wisely, pursue the matter
 By exploiting the gifts he's got.
 If nature's made him handsome, let him flash his best profile;
 If smooth-skinned, he should recline
 Bare-shouldered. The brilliant talker can fill in those awkward 505
 Silences; the good singer should sing,
 The good drinker—drink. But brilliant declamations
 And highflown poetic recitals are out of place
 In common-or-garden discourse.' Such was Apollo's counsel,
 Counsel to be obeyed: this god speaks truth. 510
 Back to my theme, then. Any intelligent lover
 Will win in the end: my techniques

- Are sure to bring him fulfilment. Not every sown furrow
 Repays its investment with interest, not every wind
 Blows your wandering ship on course. Lovers get less pleasure 515
 Than pain: let them steel their hearts
 To endless hardship. As thick as Sicily's swarming
 Bees, or hares on Athos, or the grey
 Olive-tree's clustering yield, or shells on the shore, so many
 Are the pains of love: there's gall for us in those pricks. 520
- She's out*, they'll announce, although you well may glimpse her
 Somewhere inside. So, she's out,
 You were seeing visions. Suppose she locks the door against you
 Come the promised night? Then doss down
 On the bare ground. It's dirty? Too bad. Even when some lying 525
 And snotty maid asks, 'What's this
 Fellow hanging around for?' still coax door and cruel mistress,
 Take off your wreath of roses, hang it up
 On the knocker. When she's willing, move in; when she avoids you,
 Take yourself off: no gentleman should become 530
 An importunate bore. Why force your mistress to say, 'You
 Just can't get rid of old so-and-so'? She won't
Always be set against you. And don't think it demeaning
 To endure a girl's blows or curses, to kiss her feet.
- Why waste time over trifles? My mind's on greater matters, 535
 Great themes will I tackle—your full
 Attention, please, reader! The task will be arduous—but no credit
 Otherwise: hard and exacting the toil
 My art demands. Bear patiently with a rival, and victory
 Will be yours, you'll triumph in the end. 540
 Take this not as mere human opinion, believe it rather
 Prophetic utterance: nothing in my art
 Is of greater importance. Put up with her flirtations,
 Leave her billets-doux alone, let her come or go
 As she pleases. Husbands allow this latitude to lawful 545
 Wives—they nod off, let sleep assist the fun.
 At this game, I must confess, I fall short of perfection,
 But what to do? I just can't follow my own
 Instructions. What, sit by while someone's making passes
 At my girl? Let that go, not blow my top? 550
 Her own incumbent, as I remember, had kissed her: I resented
 The kisses: my love abounds with wild
 Uncivilized instincts (a fault that has caused me trouble
 On more than one occasion). Wiser the man
 Who oils doors for his rivals. But it's best to know nothing, 555
 Let guilty secrets be hidden; don't make her confess,
 Spare her blushes. Observe, you young blades, don't catch out your girls: no,

Let them cheat you—and while they're cheating, believe
 They've eluded discovery. Passion's fanned by detection,
 A guilty pair revealed will always persist 560
 In the love that undid them. Take one famous example—
 Vulcan's crafty snaring of Mars
 And Venus. Driven wild by a frantic passion
 For the goddess, Mars was transformed
 From grim captain to lover. Nor did Venus play the rustic 565
 And hold out against his entreaties: there's no
 Goddess more willing. Ah, the times she mocked her husband's
 Limp, the wanton, or his hands, made hard
 By toil at the forge and bellows! To ape him in Mars' presence
 Lent her chic, gave added charm 570
 To her beauty. At first they concealed their adulterous
 Meetings: guilt blushed, shame kept
 The affair quite dark. But who could deceive the Sun? He
 Saw all—and told Vulcan what acts
 His wife was performing. Sun, that's a bad example 575
 You set there. Just ask, she'll oblige
 You too in return for your silence. So Vulcan set hidden
 Snares round and over the bed (no eye
 Could detect them), then put about he was off to Lemnos. The lovers
 Met as arranged, were trapped 580
 In the toils, lay naked: tableau. Then Vulcan invited
 All the gods round. Venus came close to tears—
 She and Mars couldn't cover their faces, couldn't even
 Move a hand to their private parts.
 Someone laughed and said: 'If you find your chains a burden, 585
 Brave Mars, transfer them to me!'
 At Neptune's urging, reluctantly, Vulcan released them:
 Venus ran off to Paphos, Mars to Thrace.
 So much for Vulcan's plotting: once their shameful
 Secret was out, the lovers did as they pleased 590
 Without thought for concealment. Later Vulcan admitted
 His folly, they say, and would curse the fatal skill
 He'd deployed to catch them. So, be warned by the fate of Venus,
 Don't set up the kind of snare
 She had to endure. Don't organize traps for your rivals, 595
 Don't intercept secret letters—that's a job
 More proper to husbands (if they reckon such correspondence
 Worth interception). Once more, let me repeat,
 There's no sport here that isn't legitimate, no long-skirted
 Respectable ladies figure in *my* fun. 600

Who'd dare to profane the rites of Ceres, who would publish
 The high mysteries held on Samothrace? To keep
 Silence is no great virtue, but blurting out religious

Secrets—that's a most heinous crime. 605
 Garrulous Tantalus, vainly reaching up for apples,
 In water, yet parched with thirst,
 Deserved his fate: Venus expressly commands that her holy
 Rites be kept private. I'm warning you, let no
 Kiss-and-tell gossip come near them. These mysteries may not
 Lurk in a box, may not echo to the wild 610
 Clash of bronze cymbals; yet, though so popular among us,
 Among us they still insist
 On concealment. Venus herself, when she poses naked,
 Bends down, places one hand
 Over her mons. Brute beasts may couple in public, 615
 Promiscuously, a sight to make girls blush
 And avert their eyes; but our more furtive passions call for
 Locked doors and bedrooms, we hide
 Our private parts under the bedclothes, and prefer, if not darkness,
 At least something less than bright 620
 Noonday, a touch of shadow. In the old days, when sun and weather
 Weren't yet kept off by roof-tiles, when oaks
 Provided both food and shelter, love-making was restricted
 To caves or woods. Even these simple folk
 Would have blushed to be seen in the act. But now we flaunt our prowess 625
 At such nocturnal pursuits, pay a high price
 Just for the kick of bragging. Will you give every girl in town the
 Treatment, just to be able to tell your friends
 'I had her, too?' Will you find some circumstantial scandal
 To repeat about each as she's mentioned, never lack 630
 For a victim to point at? That's mild, though: some fabricate stories
 They'd deny if true, claim there's no
 Woman they haven't slept with. If they cannot touch girls'
 Bodies, they'll smear their names: though the flesh escape
 Defilement, reputé is tarnished. So, bar the lady's chamber, 635
 You crabby old doorkeeper, fix on a hundred bolts—
 What's left secure when her name's fair game for 'adulterers'
 Who work to convince the world of what never took place?
 Myself, I remain discreet about my erotic encounters
 Even when they're true: keep such secrets under seal. 640

Take care not to criticize girls for their shortcomings: many
 Have found it advantageous to pretend
 Such things didn't exist. Andromeda's dusky complexion
 Left wing-footed Perseus silent. Although
 Everyone else thought Andromache too large a woman, 645
 To Hector alone she looked
 Just the right size. Habit breeds tolerance: a long-established
 Love will condone much, whereas
 At first it's all-sensitive. While a new graft's growing

- In the green cortex, a light
 Breeze can detach it; but soon, time-strengthened, the tree will
 Outface all winds, hold firm,
 Bear adopted fruit. Time heals each physical blemish,
 The erstwhile flaw will fade:
 Young nostrils cannot abide the stink of tanning leather,
 But age inures them to it, after a while
 They don't even notice the smell. Labels minimize feelings—
 She's blacker than pitch? Try 'brunette'.
 If she squints, compare her to Venus. She croaks? She's Minerva!
 A living skeleton? 'Svelte' is the word. Call her 'trim'
 When she's minuscule, or 'plumpish' when she's a Fat Lady—
 Use proximate virtues to camouflage each fault.
- Don't ask her age, don't inquire under just which consul
 She was born—leave that kind of chore
 To the Censor's office, especially if she's past her girlish
 Prime, and already plucking those first
 White hairs. Such ladies, in this (or even a higher) age-group
 Are good value, a field worth sowing, ready to bear.*
 Besides, they possess a wider range of knowledge
 And experience, the sole source
 Of true skill: they make up for their years with sophistication,
 Camouflaging their age through art; they know
 A thousand postures—name yours—for making love in,
 More ways than any pillow-book could reveal.
 They need no stimuli to warm up their passions—
 Men and women should share the same
 Pleasures. I hate it unless both lovers reach a climax:
 That's why I don't much go for boys.
 I can't stand a woman who puts out because she has to,
 Who lies there dry as a bone
 With her mind on her knitting. Pleasure by way of duty
 Holds no charm for me, I don't want
 Any dutiful martyrs. I love the sighs that betray their rapture,
 That beg me to go slow, to keep it up
 Just a little longer. It's great when my mistress comes, eyes swooning,
 Then collapses, can't take any more
 For a long while. Such joys attend you in your thirties:
 Nature does not bestow them on green youth.
 For the hasty, new-bottled wine; for me, a vintage
 Laid down long years before.
 Only an ageing plane-tree can block the sunlight,

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*Editors have often remarked that lines 669–74 are out of place here, but no truly satisfactory place was found for them until it was shown that they properly belong at the end of Book 2, between lines 732 and 733. I have therefore transposed them in the present version.

Bare feet are crippled by a new-grown field.	
Would you rate Helen's daughter Hermione over Helen? Was Medusa	
An improvement on <i>her</i> mother? Any man	700
Willing to get involved with mature passions,	
And to stay the course, will win a worthwhile prize.	
So the bed, as though consciously, has received its two lovers.	
And the door is shut. Muse, you must wait outside:	
They don't need you, now, to prompt their whispered endearments,	705
Their hands won't be idle, fingers will learn	
What to do in those hidden parts where Love's unnoticed	
Darts transfix the flesh.	
Andromache got this treatment from most valiant Hector—	
His talents extended beyond war:	710
Captive Briseis was handled thus by the great Achilles,	
Who came, battle-weary, to her soft bed.	
Those hands, Briseis, you let those bloody hands caress you	
Though daily they claimed their stint	
Of Phrygian dead. Or was that just what you found so exciting—	715
The hands of a conqueror on your limbs?	
Believe me, love's acme of pleasure must not be hurried,	
But drawn insensibly on—and when you've found	
Those places a woman adores to have touched up, don't let any	
Feeling of shame prevent you, go right in.	720
You'll see that tremulous glint in her eyes, like the dazzle	
Of sunlight on a lake;	
She'll moan and gasp, murmur words of sweet endearment	
Well matched to the sport you're playing, heave soft sighs.	
But take care not to cram on sail and outrace your mistress,	725
Or let <i>her</i> overtake <i>you</i> ; both should pass	
The winning-post neck and neck—that's the height of pleasure,	
When man and woman lie knocked out at once.	
This is the pace you should keep when time's no object,	
And your stolen pleasures take no prick from fear;	730
When delay isn't safe, though, it helps to press on regardless,	
Step up the strike-rate, spur that galloping horse.	
While strength and age permit it, keep at such labours:	669
Bent age will come soon enough	670
On stealthy feet. Cleave the sea with oars, the soil with a ploughshare,	671
Turn your fierce hands to war—	672
Or expend your strength and toil and vigour on women:	673
This too is military service, this too needs sweat.	674
My task is ended: give me the palm, you grateful	733
Young lovers, wreath myrtle in my scented hair!	
As great as Podalirius was among the Achaeans	735
For his healing arts, or Achilles for his strength,	

Or Nestor in counsel, or Calchas as prophet, or Ajax

In arms, or Automedon as charioteer,

So great am I at the love-game. Sing my praises, declare me

Your prophet and poet, young men: let my name

740

Be broadcast world-wide. As Vulcan made arms for Achilles,

So have I done for you: then use

My gift, as he did, to conquer! And when you've brought down your

Amazon, write on the trophy *Ovid was my guide*.

Now the girls (hullo there!) are begging me for lessons:

745

The next part of this poem will be yours.

Reading 4

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Introduction by Michael Levin

The Bible is arguably the single most important work of Western literature; it has had a profound effect on the culture, philosophy, and even the languages of Western civilization. It is also perhaps the most controversial work you will find in this sourcebook, precisely because it is so important to so many people. For all these reasons, no course on the Humanities in the Western Tradition would be complete without a close look at the Bible. Our ideas about human nature, human society, the role of religion — in short, most of the themes of this course — have all been shaped by this one work.

More specifically, the first half of the Bible, or the Hebrew Scriptures (referred to as the Old Testament after the development of Christianity) is at the heart of the Jewish religion and people. The various individual books of the Hebrew Scriptures, written by different people over the course of many centuries, collectively tell the story of the Israelites. We can follow the development of this particular group of people, from their origins (or Genesis), through their first encounters with God, who tells the Israelites that they are his Chosen People. Eventually the Israelites become a people of Law, guided by divine wisdom as revealed to them by God. But the Israelites are very human — they often doubt, and they sometimes fail to live up to God's expectations, leading to divine punishment. When reading these stories, it is important to remember that the Hebrew Scriptures are a combination of religious instruction and historical narrative. Modern day Jews regard these scriptures as both a moral guide and a record of where they came from.

Our selections from the Hebrew Scriptures begin with the beginning of everything, from the Book of Genesis (which means origin or creation). Many of the stories included in this section may be familiar to you — the Garden of Eden, Cain and Abel, Noah and Flood. But do not skip this section! Read these stories carefully — you might be surprised. Ask yourself what is really going on here. What is God's purpose in placing the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden? Why does God decide to cause the Flood? These stories are not as simple as you might think. Also, in chapter nine pay close attention to the idea of a "covenant," or a contract between God and Noah. This is a key concept in the Hebrew Scriptures, the idea that people (and in particular the Chosen People) can make agreements with God.

In the Book of Exodus, we see evidence that God honors his side of the covenant he made with the Israelites; he rescues the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. But he acts through a human

agent, a reluctant hero named Moses. And initially, the Israelites are not all that grateful to be rescued. They wander through the desert for forty years, and go through several crises of faith. What message is being given here about human nature? Eventually, they arrive at Mount Sinai, where God gives Moses the Ten Commandments as well as many other laws. This section is one of the foundation stones of Western society. What do the laws emphasize? How are we supposed to live our lives?

The Book of Isaiah takes place much later in the history of the Israelites, after they have settled in the land of Canaan. By this time, the Israelites have become prosperous, but they have begun to neglect their religious duties. Isaiah is one of a series of prophets who warn the Israelites that if they do not correct the error of their ways, God will punish them. And this is exactly what happens — the Babylonians conquer Canaan and enslave the Israelites. Isaiah also predicts that one day a child will be born who will be a Messiah, or a savior. Centuries later, followers of Jesus would claim that Jesus was in fact the Messiah who Isaiah had foreseen.

Finally, in the Book of Job we have a fascinating (and perhaps troubling) story about how God sometimes tests our faith. Job is a virtuous man, who, for no apparent reason, loses everything. Eventually, even Job's famous patience begins to wear thin, and he dares to question God. How does God respond? Compare the vision of God presented here with the Greek gods you read about earlier in the semester. What makes the God of the Hebrew Scriptures different from all other gods?

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES COMMONLY CALLED

GENESIS

Genesis, meaning “beginning,” covers the times from the creation (i.e., the beginning of history) to the Israelite sojourn in Egypt. The book falls naturally into two main sections: chs. 1–11 deal with primeval history; chs. 12–50 treat the history of the “fathers” of Israel. The latter section tells the stories of Abraham (chs. 12–25), of Isaac and his twin sons Esau and Jacob (chs. 26–36), and of Jacob’s family, the chief member of which was Joseph (chs. 37–50).

Unlike the stories of primeval history, those of the patriarchs can be read against the background of the history of the Near East in the early part of the second millennium B.C. (2000–1500), as documented from extra-Biblical sources (see “Survey of . . . Bible Lands,” § 6). The primary purpose of the whole book, however, is to narrate God’s dealings with men and, in particular, to interpret Israel’s special role in his historical plan. Thus the call of Abraham (12.1–3) is the great turning point. God’s creation had been marred by man’s persistent wickedness which not even the flood erased. Out of this fallible human material, however, God gradually separated one family line and eventually chose one man, Abraham, promising that he and his people would have a great historical destiny and would be instrumental in bringing divine blessing upon all the dispersed families of mankind.

The book is composed of three main literary traditions (Judean, Ephraimite, and Priestly; see Introduction to Pentateuch) and these, in turn, often preserve ancient oral tradition. Thus the voices of many generations unite in the affirmation that the only true God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose redemptive purpose, like the rainbow of his promise, spans the course of human history from its remote beginning to its unrealized future.

IN THE BEGINNING God CREATED^a the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit^b of God was moving over the face of the waters.

³ And God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

⁶ And God said, “Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” ⁷ And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. And it was so. ⁸ And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.

a Or When God began to create b Or wind

1.1–2.4a: The Priestly story of creation. Out of original chaos God created an orderly world in which he assigned a preeminent place to man. **1:** Probably a preface to the whole story, though possibly introductory to v. 3: *When God began to create* (note *a*) . . . *God said* (compare 2.4b–7). The ancients believed the world originated from and was founded upon a watery chaos (*the deep*; compare Ps.24.1,2), portrayed as a dragon in various myths (Is.51.9). **3–5:** Creation by the word of God (Ps.33.6–9) expresses God’s absolute lordship and prepares for the doctrine of creation out of nothing (2 Macc.7.28). Light was created first (2 Cor.4.6), even before the sun, and was *separated* from *night*, a remnant of uncreated darkness (v. 2). Since the Jewish day began with sundown, the order is *evening* and *morning*. **6–8:** A *firmament*, or solid dome (Job 37.18), separated the upper from the lower waters (Ex.20.4; Ps.148.4).

9 And God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. ¹¹ And God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth." And it was so. ¹² The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.

¹⁴ And God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶ And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; he made the stars also. ¹⁷ And God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the firmament of the heavens." ²¹ So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves,

with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." ²³ And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and everything that creeps upon the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹ And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to

See 7.11 n. 9–10: The *seas*, a portion of the watery chaos, were assigned boundaries at the edge of the earth (Ps. 139.9; Pr. 8.29), where they continue to menace God's creation (Jer. 5.22; Ps. 104.7–9). 11–13: *Vegetation* was created only indirectly by God; his creative command was directed to *the earth*. 14–19: The sun, moon, and stars are not divine powers that control man's destiny, as was believed in antiquity, but are only *lights*. Implicitly worship of the heavenly host is forbidden (Dt. 4.19; Zeph. 1.5). 20–23: The creation of birds and fishes. *Sea monsters*, see Pss. 74.13; 104.25–26. 24–25: God's command for the earth to *bring forth* (compare v. 11) suggests that the animals are immediately bound to *the ground* and only indirectly related to God, in contrast with man. 26–27: The solemn divine decision emphasizes man's supreme place at the climax of God's creative work. 26: The plural *us, our* (3.22; 11.7; Is. 6.8) probably refers to the divine beings who compose God's heavenly court (1 Kg. 22.19; Job 1.6). Made in *the image of God*, man is the creature through whom God manifests his rule on earth. The language reflects "royal theology" in which, as in Egypt, the king was the "image of God." 27: *Him, them*: man was not created to be alone but is *male and female* (2.18–24). *Man*, the Hebrew word is "adam," a collective, referring to mankind. 28: As God's representative, man is given *dominion* (Ps. 8.6–8). 29–30: His dominion is limited, as shown by the vegetarian requirement, modified in

everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.² And on the seventh day God finished his work which he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done.³ So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation.

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,⁵ when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up — for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;⁶ but a mist^c went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground —⁷ then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed.⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life

also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers.¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Hav'ilah, where there is gold;¹² and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there.¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush.¹⁴ And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden;¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

18 Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”¹⁹ So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.²⁰ The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.

c Or flood

Noah's time (9.2–3); it is to be benevolent and peaceful (compare Is. 11.6–8). **31:** *Very good* (vv. 4, 10, 12, etc.), corresponding perfectly to God's purpose. **2.1–3:** The verb *rested* (Hebrew “*shabat*”) is the basis of the noun *sabbath* (Ex. 31.12–17).

2.4b–3.24: The creation and the fall of man. This is a different tradition from that in 1.1–2.4a, as evidenced by the flowing style and the different order of events, e.g. man is created before vegetation, animals, and woman. **6:** A *mist* (or *flood*) probably refers to the water which surged up from the subterranean ocean, the source of fertility (49.25). **7:** The word-play on *man* (‘*adham*) and *ground* (‘*adhamah*) introduces a motif characteristic of this early tradition: man's relation to the ground from which he was *formed*, like a potter molds clay (Jer. 18.6). Man is not body and soul (a Greek distinction) but is dust animated by the LORD God's *breath* or “spirit” which constitutes him a *living being* or psycho-physical self (Ps. 104.29–30; Job 34.14–15). **8–9:** *Eden*, meaning “delight,” is a “garden of God” (Is. 51.3; Ezek. 31.8–9; Jl. 2.3) or divine park. **9:** The *tree of life* was believed to confer eternal life (3.22; see Pr. 3.18 n.; Rev. 22.2, 14, 19), as the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* confers wisdom (see 2 Sam. 14.17; Is. 7.15). **10–14:** The rivers, springing from the subterranean ocean (v. 6), flowed out to the four corners of the known historical world. **15–17:** Man is given a task: to *till* and *keep* the garden. The prohibition against eating the forbidden fruit (3.3) stresses God's lordship and man's obedience. **18:** *To be alone* is not good, for man is social by nature (see 1.27 n.). A *helper fit for him* means a partner who is suitable for him, who completes his being. **19:** Naming the animals signifies man's

²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; ²² and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,^d
because she was taken out of Man.”^e

²⁴ Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

3 Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden’?”

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden;

³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”

¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” ¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I ate.” ¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all cattle,
and above all wild animals;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your seed and her seed;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children,
yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”

d Heb *ishshah* *e* Heb *ish*

dominion over them (compare 1.28). **21–23:** The deep affinity between man and woman is portrayed in the statement that God made the woman from the man’s *rib*. **24–25:** Sex is not regarded as evil but as a God-given impulse which draws man and woman together so that *they become one flesh*. **25:** The two were unashamedly *naked*, a symbol of their guiltless relation to God and to one another. **3.1–7:** The temptation begins with the insinuation of doubt (vv. 1–3), increases as suspicion is cast upon God’s motive (vv. 4–5), and becomes irresistible when the couple sense the possibilities of freedom (v. 6). **1:** *The serpent*, one of the wild creatures, distinguished by uncanny wisdom (Mt. 10.16); there is a hint of a seductive power in man’s environment, hostile to God. **5:** *Like God*: perhaps “like gods” (Septuagint), the divine beings of the heavenly court (v. 22; 1.26 n.). *Knowing good and evil*, see 2.9 n. **7:** Bodily shame (2.25) symbolizes anxiety about broken relationship with God. **8–13:** Anxiety leads to a guilty attempt to hide from God (Ps. 139.7–12), described anthropomorphically as strolling in his garden. **14–15:** The curse contains an old explanation of why the serpent crawls rather than walks and why men are instinctively hostile to it. **16:** This divine judgment contains an old explanation of woman’s pain in childbirth, her sexual *desire* for her husband (i.e. her motherly

17 And to Adam he said,
 "Because you have listened to the voice of
 your wife,
 and have eaten of the tree
 of which I commanded you,
 'You shall not eat of it,'
 cursed is the ground because of you;
 in toil you shall eat of it all the days of
 your life;
 18 thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to
 you;
 and you shall eat the plants of the field.
 19 In the sweat of your face
 you shall eat bread
 till you return to the ground,
 for out of it you were taken;
 you are dust,
 and to dust you shall return."

20 The man called his wife's name Eve,^f
 because she was the mother of all living.

21 And the LORD God made for Adam and for
 his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the
 man has become like one of us, knowing good
 and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand
 and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and
 live for ever"—²³ therefore the LORD God
 sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till
 the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He
 drove out the man; and at the east of the gar-
 den of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a
 flaming sword which turned every way, to
 guard the way to the tree of life.

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she
 conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have
 gotten^g a man with the help of the LORD."

² And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now
 Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller
 of the ground. ³ In the course of time Cain
 brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit
 of the ground, ⁴ and Abel brought of the
 firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions.
 And the LORD had regard for Abel and his
 offering, ⁵ but for Cain and his offering he had
 no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his
 countenance fell. ⁶ The LORD said to Cain,
 "Why are you angry, and why has your coun-
 tenance fallen? ⁷ If you do well, will you not
 be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is
 couching at the door; its desire is for you, but
 you must master it."

⁸ Cain said to Abel his brother, "Let us go
 out to the field."^h And when they were in the
 field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel,
 and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain,
 "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do
 not know; am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ And
 the LORD said, "What have you done? The
 voice of your brother's blood is crying to me
 from the ground. ¹¹ And now you are cursed
 from the ground, which has opened its mouth
 to receive your brother's blood from your
 hand. ¹² When you till the ground, it shall no
 longer yield to you its strength; you shall be a

^f The name in Hebrew resembles the word for *living*

^g Heb *qanah*, get

impulse, compare 30.1), and her subordinate position to man in ancient society. **17–19:** An explanation of man's struggle to eke an existence from the soil. Work is not essentially evil (2.15) but it becomes *toil* as a result of man's broken relationship with his Creator. **17:** The Hebrew word *Adam* is usually translated "man" in this story (see 1.27 n.). Note that the curse is upon the ground, not man. **19:** *Till you return to the ground:* The mortal nature of man was implicit in the circumstances of his origin (2.7); because of man's disobedience, God now makes death an inevitable fate that haunts man throughout life. **21:** *Garments of skins*, a sign of God's protective care even in the time of judgment (4.15). **22:** *Like one of us*, see 3.5 n. *The tree of life* (2.9) does not figure in the temptation story, which explicitly speaks of only one tree in the center of the garden (3.3–6, 11–12, 17). **24:** *The cherubim*, guardians of sacred areas (1 Kg.8.6–7), were represented as winged creatures like the Sphinx of Egypt, half human and half lion (Ezek.41.18–19). A *flaming sword* (compare Jer.47.6) was placed near the cherubim to remind banished man of the impossibility of overstepping his creaturely bounds (compare Ezek.28.13–16).

4.1–26: Cain, Abel, and Seth. 2–5: The story reflects the tension between farmers and semi-nomads, two different ways of life that are symbolized in the two types of offerings. No reason is given for the acceptance of Abel's offering (compare Ex.33.19). **7:** Perhaps the meaning is that Cain himself will be *accepted*, even though his offering is not, if his deed springs from the right motive. Sin is pictured as a predatory animal, *couching at the door*. **10–11:** Blood is sacred to God, for it is the seat of life (Dt.12.23) and cries *from the ground* for vindication. **13–14:** Cain concludes that

fugitive and a wanderer on the earth.”¹³ Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is greater than I can bear.”¹⁴ Behold, thou hast driven me this day away from the ground; and from thy face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will slay me.”¹⁵ Then the LORD said to him, “Not so!ⁱ If any one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him.¹⁶ Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod,^j east of Eden.

17 Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Me-hu’ja-el, and Me-hu’ja-el the father of Me-thu’sha-el, and Me-thu’sha-el the father of Lamech.¹⁹ And Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.²⁰ Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle.²¹ His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.²² Zillah bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Na’amah.

23 Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;

you wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say:

I have slain a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.

²⁴ If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, “God has appointed for me another child instead of Abel, for Cain slew him.”

²⁶ To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

5 This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.² Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created.

³ When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

⁴ The days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years; and he had other sons and daughters.⁵ Thus all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

⁶ When Seth had lived a hundred and five years, he became the father of Enosh.⁷ Seth lived after the birth of Enosh eight hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.⁸ Thus all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

⁹ When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan.¹⁰ Enosh lived after the birth of Kenan eight hundred and fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

h Sam Gk Syr Compare Vg: Heb lacks *Let us go out to the field* *i* Gk Syr Vg: Heb *Therefore* *j* That is *Wandering*

exile from the farmland is also exile from the LORD’s *face*, i.e. protective presence, exposing him to blood revenge. **15:** The “mark of Cain” was a protective mark, perhaps a tattoo, signifying divine mercy. **17:** Here Cain is not the ancestor of nomadic tribesmen (vv. 11–16) but the founder of sedentary culture. **19–22:** Cultural advance is evidenced by the three occupations of Lamech’s sons: shepherds, musicians, and smiths. **23–24:** An ancient song, probably once sung in praise of Lamech, is here quoted to illustrate the development of wickedness from murder to measureless blood revenge. **25–26:** From Cain’s genealogy the narrator returns to the sequel of Cain’s banishment (vv. 11–16) and introduces the new line of Seth. **26b:** This tradition traces the worship of the LORD (Yahweh) back to the time of Adam’s grandson, in contrast to other traditions which claim that the sacred name was introduced in Moses’ time (Ex.3.13–15; 6.2–3).

5.1–32: The generations from Adam to Noah. This priestly tradition bridges the times from the creation to the flood. **1:** *The book of the generations* was evidently a separate source from which the writer drew genealogical data (6.9; 10.1; 11.10,27; etc.). **1b–2:** See 1.26–28. **3:** The divine *likeness* (v. 1; see 1.26 n.) was continued in Adam’s son Seth, born *in his own likeness*, and thus was transmitted to succeeding generations without effacement (9.6). Priestly tradition makes no reference to the account of the fall of man. **4–32:** Babylonian tradition also reckons ten heroes

¹¹ Thus all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

¹² When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Ma-hal'-alel. ¹³ Kenan lived after the birth of Ma-hal'-alel eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Thus all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

¹⁵ When Ma-hal'-alel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶ Ma-hal'-alel lived after the birth of Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Thus all the days of Ma-hal'-alel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

¹⁸ When Jared had lived a hundred and sixty-two years he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹ Jared lived after the birth of Enoch eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰ Thus all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

²¹ When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methu'selah. ²² Enoch walked with God after the birth of Methu'selah three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters. ²³ Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

²⁵ When Methu'selah had lived a hundred and eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶ Methu'selah lived after the birth of Lamech seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷ Thus all the days of Methu'selah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

²⁸ When Lamech had lived a hundred and eighty-two years, he became the father of a son, ²⁹ and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground which the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the toil of our hands." ³⁰ Lamech lived after the birth of Noah five hundred and ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters. ³¹ Thus all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

³² After Noah was five hundred years old, Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 When men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, "My spirit shall not abide in man for ever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years." ⁴ The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

⁵ The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am

before the flood but ascribes fantastically higher ages. In Hebrew tradition the ages decrease from 900–1000 (Adam to Noah), to 200–600 (Noah to Abraham), to 100–200 (the patriarchs), to the normal three-score years and ten (Ps.90.10). This list is somehow related to the genealogy of Cain (4.17–21) as shown by the resemblance of some of the names. **24:** Babylonian tradition also reports that the seventh hero before the flood was taken by God, i.e. translated (2 Kg.2.11). **29:** This verse, the only connection with the early traditions of Eden (3.17–19) and Cain and Abel, anticipates the new age inaugurated with Noah (9.20).

6.1–4: The birth of the Nephilim is related to demonstrate the increase of wickedness on the earth. **1:** This old fragment of mythology connects immediately with chs. 2–4. **2:** *The sons of God* were divine beings who belonged to the heavenly court (1.26 n.). **3:** Despite the lustful intrusion of divine beings into the human sphere, man did not become semi-divine (compare 3.22–24) but remained a mortal creature in whom the LORD's *spirit* dwells temporarily (see 2.7 n.). **4:** Originally the story accounted for *the Nephilim* (Num.13.33; Dt.2.10–11), men of gigantic stature whose superhuman power was thought to result from divine-human marriage.

sorry that I have made them.”⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God.¹⁰ And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.¹² And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth.¹³ And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh; for the earth is filled with violence through them; behold, I will destroy them with the earth.¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.¹⁶ Make a roof^k for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above; and set the door of the ark in its side; make it with lower, second, and third decks.¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall die.¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you; and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals

according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you, to keep them alive.²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up; and it shall serve as food for you and for them.”²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7 Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.² Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals, the male and his mate; and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate;³ and seven pairs of the birds of the air also, male and female, to keep their kind alive upon the face of all the earth.⁴ For in seven days I will send rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground.”⁵ And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

6 Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth.⁷ And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him went into the ark, to escape the waters of the flood.⁸ Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground,⁹ two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah.¹⁰ And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.

k Or window

6.5–8.22: The great flood. God’s judgment took the form of a destructive flood, and his mercy was shown in saving a remnant with whom he made a new historical beginning. **5–8:** An introduction, belonging to the old literary tradition found in 2.4b–3.24; 4.1–26; 6.1–4. **5:** The *heart* includes the will and reason, as shown by its capacity for *imagination* of thought. **7:** The Biblical account is superficially similar to the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic. The Biblical perspective, however, is basically different, for the flood was not the expression of polytheistic caprice but of God’s judgment upon the *wickedness of man*. **9:** Noah was a *righteous man*, i.e. he stood in right relationship to God (15.6). **11–22:** A parallel version. It is generally recognized that an earlier and a later (priestly) tradition have been combined. **11:** The earth, once seen to be “good” (1.31), is called *corrupt* owing to man’s *violence* or wilful, lawless deeds. **14–16:** In the Babylonian epic too, the hero is commanded to build a houseboat, sealing it with pitch. **15:** The dimensions: about 450 × 75 × 45 feet.

7.1–10: This section is essentially a continuation of the early tradition (6.5–8). **2–3:** On clean and unclean animals, see Lev. ch. 11. (The priestly version mentions two animals of every sort [v.9; 6.19], presuming that the clean-unclean distinction was introduced at Sinai.) **4:** The flood was caused by heavy rainfall, lasting *forty days and forty nights*

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened.¹² And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark,¹⁴ they and every beast according to its kind, and all the cattle according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth according to its kind, and every bird according to its kind, every bird of every sort.¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.¹⁶ And they that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

17 The flood continued forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.¹⁸ The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters.¹⁹ And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered;²⁰ the waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep.²¹ And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth, and every man;²² everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died.²³ He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were

blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark.²⁴ And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

8 But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided;² the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained,³ and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters had abated;⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ar'arat.⁵ And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

6 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made,⁷ and sent forth a raven; and it went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth.⁸ Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground;⁹ but the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put forth his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him.¹⁰ He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;¹¹ and the dove came back to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth a freshly plucked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.¹² Then he waited another seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she did not return to him any more.

(v. 12; compare the difference in the priestly version, v. 24). **11–24:** Largely from the priestly tradition. **11:** Here the flood was not caused by a rain storm but was a cosmic catastrophe resulting from opening the *windows of the heavens* (or the firmament) and the upsurging of the *fountains of the great deep* (or the subterranean watery chaos; see 1.6–8 n.). Thus the earth was threatened with a return to pre-creation chaos (1.2). **15:** The animals went in *two by two* (6.19; see 7.2 n.). **16b:** *The LORD shut him in*, a note from the early tradition, which delights in anthropomorphic touches. **18–20:** The waters covered *all the high mountains*, thus threatening a confluence of the upper and lower waters (1.6). Archaeological evidence suggests that traditions of a prehistoric flood covering the whole earth are heightened versions of local inundations, e.g. in the Tigris-Euphrates basin. **8.1–5:** In the main a continuation of the priestly tradition. Because God *remembered Noah*, he stayed the cosmic destruction by water from above and below (v. 2a). **4:** In the Babylonian epic the boat also rested on a mountain. *Ararat* (2 Kg. 19.37; Jer. 51.27) is the name of a region in Armenia. **6–12:** Essentially from the early tradition. In the Babylonian epic the hero sent out two birds, a dove and a swallow,

13 In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. 14 In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. 15 Then God said to Noah, 16 “Go forth from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. 17 Bring forth with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh — birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth — that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply upon the earth.” 18 So Noah went forth, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. 19 And every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves upon the earth, went forth by families out of the ark.

20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And when the LORD smelled the pleasing odor, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth; neither will I ever again destroy every living creature as I have done. 22 While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

9 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply,

and fill the earth. 2 The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea; into your hand they are delivered. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; and as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4 Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning; of every beast I will require it and of man; of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. 6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image. 7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly on the earth and multiply in it.”

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him. 9 “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” 12 And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13 I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth

1 Gk: Heb repeats *every beast of the earth*

each of which came back; the third, a raven, did not return. 13–19: A continuation of the priestly account. 20–22: The early tradition relates that Noah sacrificed *burnt offerings* (Lev. ch. 1) of clean animals (see 7.2–3 n.). In the Babylonian epic the hero offered sacrifices and “the gods smelt [compare v. 21] the goodly savor.” For the curse, compare 3.17. Despite the evil *imagination of man’s heart* (6.5), the LORD’s steadfast mercy will be expressed in the regularities of nature, *seedtime and harvest*, etc.

9.1–19: **God’s covenant with Noah** included all mankind under divine promise and law. 1: The new age opened with a renewal of the blessing which had been given at creation (v. 7; compare 1.28). 3–6: The command to exercise dominion (1.28–30) is qualified by the permission to eat animal flesh but not with *its life*, i.e. *its blood* (see 4.10–11 n.). The violence which had corrupted the earth (6.11) is restrained by a very old law against murder, the validity of which is grounded in the creation: man is made in God’s *image* (1.26–27). These verses set forth the laws given to Noah, binding not only on Israel but on all men (Acts 15.20; 21.25). 8–11: The preservation of the natural order from the waters of chaos is guaranteed by a *covenant* (see 17.2 n.). Unlike later covenants (ch. 17; Ex. ch. 24), this is a universal covenant with Noah, his *descendants*, and *every living creature*, for Noah’s three sons (6.10; 9.18–19) are regarded as the ancestors of all the nations (see ch. 10). 13: Ancients imagined the rainbow as God’s weapon (bow) from which the lightnings of his arrows were shot (Ps. 7.12–13; Hab. 3.9–11). God places his weapon in the heavens as a *sign*, or visible token, that his wrath has abated.

and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will look upon it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.”

18 The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham was the father of Canaan. ¹⁹ These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was peopled.

20 Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He planted a vineyard; ²¹ and he drank of the wine, and became drunk, and lay uncovered in his tent. ²² And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his

two brothers outside. ²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it upon both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father’s nakedness. ²⁴ When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵ he said,

“Cursed be Canaan;
a slave of slaves shall he be to his
brothers.”

²⁶ He also said,

“Blessed by the LORD my God be Shem;”
and let Canaan be his slave.

²⁷ God enlarge Japheth,
and let him dwell in the tents of Shem;
and let Canaan be his slave.”

28 After the flood Noah lived three hundred and fifty years. ²⁹ All the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

m Or Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem

9.18–27: Noah’s curse upon Canaan. 20: In the new age, Noah was the *first tiller of the soil*. His success in agriculture fulfilled the prophecy made at his birth (5.29). **22:** Since the curse was later put on Canaan rather than Ham (v. 25), it is likely that Canaan was the actor originally. **24:** Here Noah’s *youngest son* is clearly Canaan, not Ham as in v. 22. **25:** The curse implies that Canaan’s subjugation to Israel was the result of Canaanite sexual perversions (Lev.18.24–30). **26:** *Shem*, 10.21. **27:** *Japheth*, 10.2–5. The verse may refer to the Philistines, one of the sea-peoples who dwelt in the tents of Shem, i.e. conquered the coast of Canaan.

Reading 5

EXODUS

12 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² “This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household; ⁴ and if the household is too small for a lamb, then a man and his neighbor next to his house shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats; ⁶ and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening.^o ⁷ Then they shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses

in which they eat them. ⁸ They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat any of it raw or boiled with water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰ And you shall let none of it remain until the morning, anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹ In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s passover. ¹² For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³ The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over

^o Heb between the two evenings

12.1–28: The feasts of passover and unleavened bread. 1–13 (and vv. 43–49): This is priestly tradition concerning the passover, an ancient nomadic spring festival which Israel reinterpreted as a memorial of the LORD’s deliverance of his people from Egypt (Dt.16.1–8; Num.9.1–14; Ezek.45.21–25). **2:** This month refers to Nisan (March–April) which in the post-exilic ecclesiastical calendar was *the beginning of months* (see Lev.23.5,23–25 n.). According to the older agricultural calendar, the new year began in the autumn (Ex.23.16; 34.22). **3–4:** Priestly tradition assumes that Israel in Egypt was already an organized *congregation* under the leadership of tribal princes (16.22). *Fathers’ houses*, see Num.1.2–4 n. The passover was a nocturnal festival, celebrated during full moon (v. 8; see Is. 30.29). **7:** Blood, regarded as the deity’s portion of the sacrifice (Lev.1.5), was smeared on the doorposts and the lintel, the holy places of the house (21.6; Dt.6.9), as a protection against the destroyer (vv. 22–23; see 4.24 n.). **11:** The feast must be eaten in readiness for the march, in commemoration of Israel’s hasty exodus. **12–13:** Here *passover* is

you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

14 "This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever.¹⁵ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses, for if any one eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.¹⁶ On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly; no work shall be done on those days; but what every one must eat, that only may be prepared by you.¹⁷ And you shall observe the feast of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt: therefore you shall observe this day, throughout your generations, as an ordinance for ever.¹⁸ In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, and so until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.¹⁹ For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses; for if any one eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land.²⁰ You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread."

21 Then Moses called all the elders of Israel, and said to them, "Select lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the passover lamb.²² Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin,

and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood which is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.²³ For the LORD will pass through to slay the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to slay you.²⁴ You shall observe this rite as an ordinance for you and for your sons for ever.²⁵ And when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service.²⁶ And when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'²⁷ you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he slew the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshipped.

28 Then the people of Israel went and did so; as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

29 At midnight the LORD smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the first-born of the cattle.³⁰ And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where one was not dead.³¹ And he summoned Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, go forth from among my people, both you and the people of Israel; and

interpreted from a verb meaning "to pass over," referring to the LORD's passing over Israelite houses during the plague of the first-born (vv. 24–27). **14–20:** The feast of unleavened cakes, originally an agricultural festival held at the time of barley harvest, was also converted into an historical commemoration and came to be closely connected with the passover (Dt.16.1–8; Ezek.45.21–25). **14:** The passover was celebrated on the 14th of Nisan (v. 6); *this day* refers to the 15th (Lev.23.6; Num.28.17). The seven day festival is regarded as a continuation of the passover. **15:** The absence of leaven (yeast) is interpreted as due to hasty preparations for flight (vv. 34,39; Dt.16.3). Originally leaven, owing to its fermenting or corrupting power (23.18; Mt.16.6; 1 Cor.5.7), was regarded as a ritually unclean substance (compare Lev.2.11) which could contaminate the whole harvest. **18:** So closely is the festival combined with the passover that it is said to begin on the evening of the 14th, i.e. the night of the passover (see v. 14). **21–28:** An older tradition concerning the passover. **22:** See v. 7 n. *Hyssop*, the foliage of an aromatic plant. Because of its presumed magical powers, it was used for ritual purposes (Lev.14.4; Num.19.6,18; Ps.51.7). **23:** *The destroyer*, or the angel of death (2 Sam.24.16; Is.37.36), was regarded as a manifestation of the LORD's power.

12.29–50: Israel's departure from Egypt. 29–32: The conclusion of the tenth plague (11.1–10). **33–34:** See v. 15 n. **35–36:** See 3.21–22 and 11.2–3. **37:** Rameses (1.11) and Succoth (13.20) were the starting places on Israel's itinerary

go, serve the LORD, as you have said.³² Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!”

33 And the Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste; for they said, “We are all dead men.”³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading bowls being bound up in their mantles on their shoulders.³⁵ The people of Israel had also done as Moses told them, for they had asked of the Egyptians jewelry of silver and of gold, and clothing;³⁶ and the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. Thus they despoiled the Egyptians.

37 And the people of Israel journeyed from Ram’ses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children.³⁸ A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very many cattle, both flocks and herds.³⁹ And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any provisions.

40 The time that the people of Israel dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.⁴² It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; so this same night is a night by watching kept to the LORD by all the people of Israel throughout their generations.

43 And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the ordinance of the passover: no foreigner shall eat of it;⁴⁴ but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him.⁴⁵ No sojourner or hired servant may eat of it.⁴⁶ In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth any of the flesh outside the house; and you shall not break a bone of it.⁴⁷ All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.⁴⁸ And when a stranger shall sojourn with you and would keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, then he may come near and keep it; he shall be as a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person shall eat of it.⁴⁹ There shall be one law for the native and for the stranger who sojourns among you.”

50 Thus did all the people of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.⁵¹ And on that very day the LORD brought the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

13 The LORD said to Moses,² “Consecrate to me all the first-born; whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.”

3 And Moses said to the people, “Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place; no leavened bread shall be eaten.⁴ This day you are to go forth, in the month of Abib.⁵ And when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites,

(Num.33.5). *Six hundred thousand men on foot* (Num.11.21), in addition to women and children, is an exaggeration, for neither the land of Goshen nor the southern Palestinian wilderness could have supported so large a population (at least two and a half million). The number apparently reflects the census list in Num.1.17–46. **38:** The *mixed multitude* (Num.11.4) included other “Hebrews” (see 1.15 n.) or rootless people. **40:** If the four hundred and thirty years (see Gen.15.13; Acts 7.6 n.; Gal.3.17 n.) covers the total time of the Egyptian sojourn, then the descent into Egypt coincided with the Hyksos invasion (about 1720 B.C.; see Gen.45.10 n.) and the Exodus occurred during the reign of Rameses II, about 1290 B.C. (see 1.8 n.). **42:** The *night of watching* refers to the passover. **43–49:** A supplement to the priestly tradition about the passover (12.1–13). A *foreigner* (v. 43), a visiting *sojourner*, and a *hired servant* (v. 45) are excluded on the ground that they are related to other gods; however, the purchased slave who becomes a part of the family (v. 44) and the sojourner who resides permanently within Israel may eat the passover, if the *one law* of circumcision is kept (Gen.17.9–14).

13.1–16: The consecration of the first-born. **2:** According to ancient belief, the devotion of the first-born of man and beast to God, the giver of fertility, was necessary for continuing increase and well-being (22.29b–30; Lev.27.26–27; Num.3.13; 8.17–18; 18.15). **3–10:** Old tradition about the feast of unleavened bread (compare the

the Amorites, the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites, which he swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month.⁶ Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD.⁷ Unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days; no leavened bread shall be seen with you, and no leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory.⁸ And you shall tell your son on that day, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.'⁹ And it shall be to you as a sign on your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt.¹⁰ You shall therefore keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.

11 "And when the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as he swore to you and your fathers, and shall give it to you,¹² you shall set apart to the LORD all that first opens the womb. All the firstlings of your cattle that are males shall be the LORD's.¹³ Every firstling of an ass you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every first-born of man among your sons you shall redeem.¹⁴ And when in time to come your son asks you, 'What does this mean?' you shall say to him, 'By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of bondage.'¹⁵ For when Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man and the first-

born of cattle. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all the males that first open the womb; but all the first-born of my sons I redeem.'¹⁶ It shall be as a mark on your hand or frontlets between your eyes; for by a strong hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt."

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, "Lest the people repent when they see war, and return to Egypt."¹⁸ But God led the people round by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle.¹⁹ And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for Joseph had solemnly sworn the people of Israel, saying, "God will visit you; then you must carry my bones with you from here."²⁰ And they moved on from Succoth, and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness.²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night;²² the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

14 Then the LORD said to Moses,² "Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-ha-hi'roth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Ba'al-ze'phon; you shall encamp over against it, by the sea.³ For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are entangled in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.'⁴ And I will harden

parallel priestly version, 12.14–20). **4:** *Abib*, the older name for the month of the Exodus (23.15; see 12.2 n.). **5:** See 3.8. **8:** In later times a man could tell *what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt*, for in worship the redemptive event was made present (12.26–27; see Dt.5.2–3 n.). **9:** See Dt.6.8. **11–16:** An old tradition about the consecration of the first-born. **13:** Unclean animals, of which the ass is typical (Lev. ch. 11; Dt. ch. 14), may be redeemed by substituting a lamb. In early times the custom arose of substituting an animal for the human first-born (34.19–20; compare Gen.22.13), although pagan human sacrifice persisted (1 Kg.16.34; 2 Kg.16.3; Ezek.20.26; Mic.6.7). **14–15:** The practice, rooted in ancient fertility beliefs, is here reinterpreted in the light of the Exodus.

13.17–14.22. Israel's deliverance. 17–18: *Philistines*, see Gen.21.34 n. The route mentioned was the main military road into Canaan. To avoid attack, the people were providentially led *round by the way of the wilderness*. On the *Red Sea*, see 14.2 n. **19:** See Gen.50.25–26 n. **21–22:** The *pillar of cloud* and the *pillar of fire* may reflect the ancient custom of carrying a burning brazier at the head of a marching army or caravan to indicate the line of march by day and night. Whatever the nature of the phenomenon originally, cloud and fire have become traditional ways of expressing God's presence and guidance (see 3.2 n.; 19.9; 33.9; 40.34–38; 1 Kg.8.10–11). **14.2:** The places mentioned, like Etham (13.20), were probably Egyptian frontier fortresses. Apparently the Israelites were unable to break through and

Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD." And they did so.

5 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, the mind of Pharaoh and his servants was changed toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" ⁶ So he made ready his chariot and took his army with him, ⁷ and took six hundred picked chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸ And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt and he pursued the people of Israel as they went forth defiantly. ⁹ The Egyptians pursued them, all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen and his army, and overtook them encamped at the sea, by Pi-ha-hi'roth, in front of Ba'al-ze'phon.

10 When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them; and they were in great fear. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD; ¹¹ and they said to Moses, "Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, in bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is not this what we said to you in Egypt, 'Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." ¹³ And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today; for the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be still." ¹⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Why do

you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ Lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go on dry ground through the sea. ¹⁷ And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

19 Then the angel of God who went before the host of Israel moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, ²⁰ coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness; and the night passed^p without one coming near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴ And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down upon the host of the Egyptians, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians, ²⁵ clogging^q their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily; and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel; for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

^p Gk: Heb and it lit up the night

^q Or binding. Sam Gk Syr: Heb removing

had to *turn back*, with the result that they were trapped (v. 3) between the water barrier and the Egyptian forces. *The sea*, known in Hebrew as the "sea of reeds," was not the Red Sea itself but a shallow body of water farther north, perhaps in the area of Lake Timsah. **11–12:** See 15.24 n. **13–14:** Viewed in faith, the victory was a mighty act of the LORD who was fighting for his people in a contest with the powerful Pharaoh (v. 25). *Salvation*, see Gen.49.18. **19–20:** One tradition expresses the divine presence as *the angel of God* (see Gen.16.7 n.), another as the shining pillar of cloud (v. 24; see 13.21–22 n.). **21–29:** The divine victory was rooted in a natural phenomenon: during a storm the shallow waters were driven back by a *strong east wind* (v. 21), making it possible for the Israelites to cross on foot. Egyptian chariots, however, were mired in the mud and engulfed by the returning waters. Tradition heightened the miracle by

26 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea, that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.”²⁷ So Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its wonted flow when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled into it, and the LORD routed^r the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen and all the host^s of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not so much as one of them remained.²⁹ But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.³¹ And Israel saw the great work which the LORD did against the Egyptians, and the people feared the LORD; and they believed in the LORD and in his servant Moses.

15 Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD, saying,

“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider^t he has thrown into the sea.

2 The LORD is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation;
this is my God, and I will praise him,
my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

3 The LORD is a man of war;
the LORD is his name.

4 “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host he cast into the sea;
and his picked officers are sunk in the Red Sea.

5 The floods cover them;
they went down into the depths like a stone.

6 Thy right hand, O LORD, glorious in power,
thy right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

7 In the greatness of thy majesty thou overthrowest thy adversaries;
thou sendest forth thy fury, it consumes them like stubble.

8 At the blast of thy nostrils the waters piled up,
the floods stood up in a heap;
the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

9 The enemy said, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake,
I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them.
I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.’

10 Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them;
they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

11 “Who is like thee, O LORD, among the gods?
Who is like thee, majestic in holiness,
terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?

12 Thou didst stretch out thy right hand,
the earth swallowed them.

13 “Thou hast led in thy steadfast love the people whom thou hast redeemed,
thou hast guided them by thy strength to thy holy abode.

r Heb *shook off* *s* Gk Syr: Heb *to all the host*
t Or *its chariot*

attributing it to Moses’ wonder-working rod (vv. 16,21a,26–27) and by saying that the waters stood up like walls (vv. 22b,29b).

15.1–21: Two songs of praise which celebrate the LORD’s deliverance of his people. **1:** The song of Moses (vv. 1–18) is introduced by quoting the ancient song of Miriam (v. 21). **2:** See 14.13–14 n. *My father’s God* refers to “the God of the fathers” (3.6). **3: A man of war**, i.e. Divine Warrior (Ps.24.8). In the following vv. Canaanite mythical motifs are used to confess the Lord’s saving action in behalf of Israel (14.14,25). **4–10:** Recital of the Divine Warrior’s victory at the Sea (Ps.78.12–13). **8–10:** The language seems influenced by the myth of a divine battle against the *sea*, the chaotic power hostile to God’s rule (see Ps.77.16–19; 114.3–6; Hab. 3.8–15). **11:** The LORD’s *glorious deeds* demonstrate that he is incomparable *among the gods* who compose his heavenly council (Pss.86.8; 89.7–8; Gen.1.26 n.). **13–17:** The guidance into Canaan. **13: Thy holy abode**, i.e. Canaan (Ps.78.54). **14: Philistia** was settled by the

- 14 The peoples have heard, they tremble;
pangs have seized on the inhabitants
of Philistia.
- 15 Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed;
the leaders of Moab, trembling seizes
them;
all the inhabitants of Canaan have
melted away.
- 16 Terror and dread fall upon them;
because of the greatness of thy arm,
they are as still as a stone,
till thy people, O LORD, pass by,
till the people pass by whom thou hast
purchased.
- 17 Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them on
thy own mountain,
the place, O LORD, which thou hast
made for thy abode,
the sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands
have established.
- 18 The LORD will reign for ever and ever."

19 For when the horses of Pharaoh with
his chariots and his horsemen went into the
sea, the LORD brought back the waters of the
sea upon them; but the people of Israel walked
on dry ground in the midst of the sea. ²⁰ Then
Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron,
took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women
went out after her with timbrels and dancing.

²¹ And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed
gloriously;
the horse and his rider he has thrown into
the sea."

22 Then Moses led Israel onward from the
Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of
Shur; they went three days in the wilderness
and found no water. ²³ When they came to
Marah, they could not drink the water of
Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was
named Marah.^u ²⁴ And the people murmured
against Moses, saying, "What shall we
drink?" ²⁵ And he cried to the LORD; and the
LORD showed him a tree, and he threw it into
the water, and the water became sweet.

There the LORD^v made for them a statute
and an ordinance and there he proved them,
²⁶ saying, "If you will diligently hearken to
the voice of the LORD your God, and do that
which is right in his eyes, and give heed to his
commandments and keep all his statutes, I
will put none of the diseases upon you which I
put upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD,
your healer."

27 Then they came to Elim, where there
were twelve springs of water and seventy
palm trees; and they encamped there by the
water.

16 They set out from Elim, and all the
congregation of the people of Israel
came to the wilderness of Sin, which is
between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day
of the second month after they had departed
from the land of Egypt. ² And the whole con-
gregation of the people of Israel murmured
against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness,
³ and said to them, "Would that we had died

^u That is *Bitterness* ^v Heb *he*

Philistines (Gen.21.32 n.) about 1175 B.C.; hence the poem was written afterwards. **15:** See Num.20.18–21; 21.13. **16:** *Purchased*, possibly "created." **17:** Canaan is described as the mythical cosmic mountain, Zaphon, where God has his *abode* and *sanctuary* (see Ps.48.1–3 n.). **19–21:** Miriam's victory dance. Miriam (Num.26.59) is called a prophetess (compare Jg.4.4) because of her ecstatic rousing of devotion to the LORD through song and dance. Compare 1 Sam.18.6–7). **21:** The Song of Miriam, one of the oldest poetic couplets in the Old Testament, was probably composed by an eyewitness of the event.

15.22–16.36: Crises in the wilderness. In times of need, when faith was put to the test, Israel perceived signs of the LORD's care and protection. **22:** *The Wilderness of Shur*, identified with the wilderness of Etham in Num.33.8, was on the border of Egypt. **24:** Israel's continual murmuring in the wilderness is a dominant theme of the tradition (16.2–3; 17.3; 32.1–4,25; Num.11.4–6; 12.1–2; 14.2–3; 16.13–14; 20.2–13; 21.4–5). **25:** It was believed that the leaves or bark of certain trees had magical properties for sweetening or "healing" water (2 Kg.2.21). **26:** *Diseases*, i.e. the Egyptian plagues. *Your healer*, Num.21.4–9; Dt.7.15; Ps.103.3. **16.1–36:** The provision of food in the wilderness. **1:** *The wilderness of Sin* (17.1; Num.33.11–12), probably on the Sinaitic Peninsula. **3:** The murmuring wanderers

by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not.”⁵ On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.”⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt,⁷ and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your murmurings against the LORD. For what are we, that you murmur against us?”⁸ And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening flesh to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your murmurings which you murmur against him — what are we? Your murmurings are not against us but against the LORD.”

9 And Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your murmurings.’”¹⁰ And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.¹¹ And the LORD said to Moses,¹² “I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

13 In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning dew lay round about the camp.¹⁴ And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as hoarfrost on the ground.¹⁵ When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?”^w For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.”¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, every man of you, as much as he can eat; you shall take an omer apiece, according to the number of the persons whom each of you has in his tent.’”¹⁷ And the people of Israel did so; they gathered, some more, some less.¹⁸ But when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; each gathered according to what he could eat.¹⁹ And Moses said to them, “Let no man leave any of it till the morning.”²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them.²¹ Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted.

22 On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers apiece; and when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses,²³ he said to them, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay by to be kept till the morning.’”²⁴ So they laid it by till the

w Or “It is manna.” Heb *man hu*

preferred the seasoned food of the *fleshpots of Egypt* to the precarious freedom of the wilderness. **4:** *Prove*, i.e. test their faith by providing only a *portion* sufficient for one day (see Dt.8.3,16; Mt.6.11). **5:** See vv. 22–30. **6–7:** *At evening* when the quails come; *in the morning* when the manna is found (vv. 8,12). In the priestly view, *the glory of the LORD* was an envelope of light (associated with the pillar of cloud and fire; see 13.21–22 n.) which veiled his being. Though men could not see God they could behold the glory which signified his presence (40.34; Num.14.10b,22; 16.19; Ezek.11.23). **9–10:** *Before the LORD*, see vv. 33–34 n. **13–21:** An early tradition concerning the provision of bread (v. 15). **13:** On the quails, see Num.11.1–35. **14:** The description here (see also v. 31 and Num.11.7–9) corresponds fairly closely to the “honey-dew” excretion of two scale-insects which feed on the twigs of the tamarisk tree. **15:** The name of the food, *manna* (v. 31), is explained by an expression meaning “What is it?” For men of faith the answer was that the natural phenomenon was *bread which the LORD has given*. **22–36:** The provision of manna

morning, as Moses bade them; and it did not become foul, and there were no worms in it.

²⁵ Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a sabbath, there will be none." ²⁷ On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, and they found none. ²⁸ And the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? ²⁹ See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days; remain every man of you in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹ Now the house of Israel called its name manna; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. ³² And Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" ³³ And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations." ³⁴ As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony, to be kept. ³⁵ And the people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land; they ate the manna, till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. ³⁶ (An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.)

17 All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Reph'idim; but

there was no water for the people to drink. ² Therefore the people found fault with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you find fault with me? Why do you put the LORD to the proof?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water, and the people murmured against Moses, and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand the rod with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ And he called the name of the place Massah^x and Mer'ibah,^y because of the fault-finding of the children of Israel, and because they put the LORD to the proof by saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

⁸ Then came Am'alek and fought with Israel at Reph'idim. ⁹ And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose for us men, and go out, fight with Am'alek; tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand." ¹⁰ So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Am'alek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; and whenever he lowered his hand, Am'alek prevailed. ¹² But Moses' hands grew weary; so they took a stone and put it under
 x That is *Proof* y That is *Contention*

is the occasion for the insertion of priestly teaching concerning the sabbath, *a day of solemn rest* (31.15; 35.2). **33–34:** *Before the LORD*, i.e. before the ark. In priestly tradition the ark is sometimes designated by its chief contents, *the Testimony* or tablets of law (27.21; Lev.16.13; Num.17.4).

17.1–16: Other trying experiences in the wilderness. 1–7: Israel's thirst was quenched with water from the rock (compare Num.20.2–13). **1:** *By stages*, see Num.33.1–49. **2–3:** See 15.24 n. *Put the LORD to proof*, i.e. challenged him to show that he was in their midst (v. 7b). **6:** Water lies below the limestone surface in the region of Sinai. **7:** The place is named both *Massah* from the Hebrew verb "test" and *Meribah* from the verb "find fault"—names which became memorials of Israel's faithlessness (Dt.6.16; 9.22; 33.8; Ps.95.8). Meribah was one of the springs at Kadesh (Num.20.13; 27.14; Dt.32.51). Marah (15.23) and Massah were evidently springs at the same oasis. Some traditions in 15.23–18.27 come from this oasis south of Beer-sheba (see Num.13.26 n.). **8–15:** The battle with the Amalekites.

him, and he sat upon it, and Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; so his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.¹³ And Joshua mowed down Am'alek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 And the LORD said to Moses, "Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Am'alek from under heaven."

¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD is my banner,¹⁶ saying, "A hand upon the banner of the LORD!² The LORD will have war with Am'alek from generation to generation."

18 Jethro, the priest of Mid'ian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.² Now Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had taken Zippo'rah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her away,³ and her two sons, of whom the name of the one was Gershom (for he said, "I have been a sojourner^a in a foreign land"),⁴ and the name of the other, Elie'zer^b (for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh").⁵ And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God.⁶ And when one told Moses, "Lo,^c your father-in-law Jethro is coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her,"⁷ Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did

obedience and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare, and went into the tent.⁸ Then Moses told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had come upon them in the way, and how the LORD had delivered them.⁹ And Jethro rejoiced for all the good which the LORD had done to Israel, in that he had delivered them out of the hand of the Egyptians.

10 And Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of Pharaoh.¹¹ Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods, because he delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians,^d when they dealt arrogantly with them."¹² And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, offered^e a burnt offering and sacrifices to God; and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses' father-in-law before God.

13 On the morrow Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from morning till evening.¹⁴ When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this that you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand about you from morning till evening?"¹⁵ And Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God,¹⁶ when they have a dis-

z Cn: Heb obscure a Heb *ger* b Heb *Eli*, my God, *ezer*, help c Sam Gk Syr: Heb *I* d Transposing the last clause of v. 10 to v. 11 e Syr Tg Vg: Heb *took*

8: The Amalekites, a fierce desert tribe, claimed control of the wilderness in the region of Kadesh (Gen.14.7; Num.13.29; 14.25). **9-13:** *Choose for us men* implies holy war (v. 16) with a select group (compare Jg. ch. 7). The young warrior, Joshua, here mentioned for the first time, was at the head of the Israelite army. Moses, however, led the battle from a hilltop and ensured victory by the power of his rod and outstretched arms and perhaps by the power of the curse (Num.22.4-6). **10:** *Hur*, elsewhere mentioned only in 24.14. **14:** *Utterly blot out*, i.e. the foe will be subjected to the sacrificial ban, a practice of holy war. **16:** The bitter feud with Amalek persisted (Num.24.20; Dt.25.17-19; 1 Sam.15.7-8; 27.8; ch. 30) until the foe was exterminated during the reign of Hezekiah (1 Chr.4.41-43).

18.1-27: Jethro's visit. The priest of Midian celebrated a sacred meal and counseled Moses about the administration of law. **1:** *Jethro*, see 2.18 n. **2-4:** Zipporah and her sons (2.21-22) apparently had been sent back from Egypt to Midian. **5:** The narrative is out of order, for Israel reached *the mountain of God* later (19.2). **9-12:** This passage may imply that the priest of Midian was already a worshiper of the LORD (see 3.1 n.). As the priest of the cult, Jethro came to rejoice in the LORD's great deeds and to officiate at a cultic celebration. **12:** *Eat bread*, an allusion to a sacred meal held *before God* (24.9-11). Moses was not invited, perhaps because he had already been initiated into the cult (3.1-6). **13-27:** Jethro's plan for the reorganization of legal administration (compare Dt.1.9-18). **13:** Like a bedouin chief,

pute, they come to me and I decide between a man and his neighbor, and I make them know the statutes of God and his decisions.”

¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ You and the people with you will wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you; you are not able to perform it alone. ¹⁹ Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God, and bring their cases to God; ²⁰ and you shall teach them the statutes and the decisions, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do. ²¹ Moreover choose able men from all the people, such as fear God, men who are trustworthy and who hate a bribe; and place such men over the people as rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times; every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves; so it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. ²³ If you do this, and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all this people also will go to their place in peace.”

²⁴ So Moses gave heed to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had said.

²⁵ Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.

²⁶ And they judged the people at all times; hard cases they brought to Moses, but any small matter they decided themselves. ²⁷ Then

Moses let his father-in-law depart, and he went his way to his own country.

19 On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ² And when they set out from Reph'-idim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mountain. ³ And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: ⁴ You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

⁷ So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the LORD had commanded him.

⁸ And all the people answered together and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses reported the words of the people to the LORD. ⁹ And the LORD said to Moses, “Lo, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you for ever.”

Then Moses told the words of the people to the LORD. ¹⁰ And the LORD said to Moses,

Moses acted as judge in the people's disputes (2 Sam.15.1–6). **15–16:** *Inquire of God*, i.e. seek a verdict by oracle (Jg.4.4–5). **21–22:** Moses was to deal with cases without legal precedent which required a special oracle (compare Dt.17.8–13); ordinary cases were to be handled by lay leaders (Num.11.16–17, 24–25) or appointed judges (compare Dt.16.18–20). *Rulers of thousands*, see Num.1.17–46 n.

19.1–25 (20.18–21): The theophany at Sinai. At the sacred mountain the LORD offered to make a covenant with Israel. **2:** *Sinai*, see 3.1 n. **3:** The account assumes that the LORD dwells in heaven, whence he “comes down” (v. 20; 3.8) to the mountain top for meeting with men (24.9–11). Compare the similar view reflected in the Babylonian temple-tower (Gen.11.1–9). **4:** *You have seen what I did*, the background and presupposition of the *covenant* (see Gen.17.2 n.) is the LORD's mighty acts of deliverance. *On eagles' wings*, Dt.32.11–12. **5:** On Israel's side, the covenant rests upon a condition, *if you will obey my voice* — an allusion to the covenant laws to be given. *My own possession*, or “treasure,” is a metaphor for Israel's special relationship to God. In freedom and grace he chose this people for his own (Dt.7.6; 14.2; 26.18), though all the earth belongs to him (Ex.9.29b). **6:** That which is holy is set apart as belonging to God; thus Israel is to be a *kingdom of priests and a holy nation*, consecrated for his service (see Is.61.6; 1 Pet.2.5,9). **7–8:** Compare 24.7. **9:** This tradition stresses Moses' role as the covenant mediator whom the people are to believe *for ever* (20.19; 24.1–2,9–11). **10–15:** In this tradition all the people are to prepare for participation in the

"Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments,"¹¹ and be ready by the third day; for on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.¹² And you shall set bounds for the people round about, saying, 'Take heed that you do not go up into the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death;¹³ no hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain."¹⁴ So Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments.¹⁵ And he said to the people, "Be ready by the third day; do not go near a woman."

16 On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.¹⁷ Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God; and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.¹⁸ And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.¹⁹ And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.²⁰ And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called

Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.²¹ And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to the LORD to gaze and many of them perish."²² And also let the priests who come near to the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out upon them."²³ And Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for thou thyself didst charge us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain, and consecrate it.'"²⁴ And the LORD said to him, "Go down, and come up bringing Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest he break out against them."²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

20 And God spoke all these words, saying,

2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 "You shall have no other gods before^f me.

4 "You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;⁵ you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

f Or besides

covenant ceremony (24.3–8). **12:** The setting of bounds so that the people do not come near the mountain (v. 21) reflects the ancient view of holiness as a mysterious, threatening power with which the mountain is charged (see 3.6 n.; 2 Sam.6.6–9). No hand may touch the offender who has become affected with the contagion of holiness (Lev.6.27–28). **14–15:** Washing or changing of garments (Gen.35.2) and sexual abstinence (1 Sam.21.4–6) were forms of ceremonial purification. **16–19:** The theophany is portrayed primarily in the imagery of a violent thunderstorm (Jg.5.4–5; Pss.18.7–15; 29.3–9; etc.). This traditional language — "earthquake, wind, and fire" (1 Kg.19.11–13) — depicts the wonder and majesty of God's revelation. **16:** The trumpet (v. 13) was sounded on cultic occasions (2 Sam.6.15).

20.1–17: The Ten Commandments, the epitome of man's duties toward God and his neighbor. **1:** *These words*, i.e. "the ten words" or the Decalogue (34.28; Dt.4.13; 10.4). Originally each commandment was a short utterance (see vv. 13,14,15), lacking the explanatory comments found, e.g. in vv. 5,6,9–11. **2:** Jewish tradition considers this to be the first commandment. Actually it is a preface which summarizes the meaning of the Exodus, thus setting law within the context of God's redemptive action. **3:** The first commandment asserts that for Israel there shall be no other gods, because the LORD is a *jealous God* (v. 5; 34.14) who will tolerate no rivals for his people's devotion. **4–6:** Imageless worship of the LORD made Israel's faith unique in the ancient world where natural powers were personified and statues

7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; ¹¹ for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

13 "You shall not kill.

14 "You shall not commit adultery.

15 "You shall not steal.

16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's."

18 Now when all the people perceived the thunderings and the lightnings and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the

people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off, ¹⁹ and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will hear; but let not God speak to us, lest we die." ²⁰ And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to prove you, and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin."

21 And the people stood afar off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. ²² And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. ²³ You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. ²⁴ An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. ²⁵ And if you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you wield your tool upon it you profane it. ²⁶ And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.'

21 "Now these are the ordinances which you shall set before them. ² When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. ³ If he comes in single, he shall go

of them (animal or human) were worshiped. Some interpreters consider vv. 3–6 as one commandment and divide v. 17 into two commandments. **7:** The third commandment prohibits the misuse of the LORD's name in magic, divination, or false swearing (Lev.19.12). It reflects the ancient view that knowledge of the name could be used to exert magical control (see Gen.32.27,29 n.). **8–11:** Keeping the sabbath *holy* means to observe it as a day separated from others, a segment of time belonging especially to God. **10:** 16.22–30. **11:** Compare Dt.5.15. **12:** 21.15,17; Dt.27.16. **13:** This commandment forbids murder (see Gen.9.5,6 n.), not the forms of killing authorized for Israel, e.g. war or capital punishment. **16:** This law demands telling the truth in a law suit involving the neighbor (23.1; Dt.19.15–21; 1 Kg.21.8–14). **17:** Some regard the first sentence as a separate commandment; however, *neighbor's house* probably includes what is enumerated in the second part of the verse: wife, manservant, etc. **18–21:** The conclusion to the theophany scene (ch. 19). The people request that Moses be the covenant mediator (see 19.9 n.) so that they need not hear God's law directly (compare Dt.5.4–5).

20.22–23.33: The Covenant Code. These laws are largely neutral in regard to Israelite faith and presuppose a settled agricultural society. They reflect a situation after Israel's invasion of Canaan, when prevailing laws were borrowed and adapted to the covenant tradition. **22–26:** Cultic regulations. **23:** See 20.4–6 n. **24–26:** The Israelite altar, in contrast to pagan models, is to be the simplest kind and is to be built wherever the LORD *causes his name to be remembered*, i.e. chooses to reveal himself. Contrast the reform demanded in Dt.12.5–14. **21.1–11:** The rights of a slave (compare Dt.15.12–18). **1:** *Ordinances* refers to laws formulated (usually in the third person) to deal with various cases, in contrast to the apodictic or unconditional law of the Israelite theocracy (e.g. the Decalogue). These case laws reflect the agricultural way of life in Canaan (e.g. 22.5–6) and are similar in style and content to other legal codes of the ancient Near East. **2:** *Hebrew*, see Ex.1.15 n. An Israelite could go into servitude because of debts (Ex.22.1;

out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's and he shall go out alone. ⁵ But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' ⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for life.

⁷ "When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸ If she does not please her master, who has designated her^g for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed; he shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has dealt faithlessly with her. ⁹ If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. ¹⁰ If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. ¹¹ And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

¹² "Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. ¹³ But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴ But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him treacherously, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

¹⁵ "Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁶ "Whoever steals a man, whether he sells him or is found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

¹⁷ "Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁸ "When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but keeps his bed, ¹⁹ then if the man rises again and walks abroad with his staff, he that struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

²⁰ "When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be punished. ²¹ But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be punished; for the slave is his money.

²² "When men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt her shall^h be fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³ If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

²⁶ "When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free for the eye's sake. ²⁷ If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free for the tooth's sake.

²⁸ "When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be clear. ²⁹ But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰ If a

g Another reading is *so that he has not designated her*

h Heb *he shall*

Lev.25.39; 2 Kg.4.1). **6:** *To God*, i.e. the legal act had to be performed at the sacred doorpost of the house (see 12.7 n.), perhaps in the presence of the household gods (Gen.31.19). **7–11:** The rights of a female slave or concubine (compare Dt.15.12,17). **8:** *Redeemed*, i.e. by a relative or another buyer who pays the purchase price.

21.12–32: Laws protecting human beings. 12–14: A distinction is drawn between intentional and unintentional murder. As protection from the swift justice of the blood-avenger, the man-slayer is guaranteed asylum (Num.35.12; Dt.4.41–43; 19.1–13; Jos. ch. 20), so that the case may be adjudicated soberly by legal authorities. The asylum in ancient times was at the altar (1 Kg.2.28–34). **17:** The curse, according to ancient belief, released an inexorable power (Num.22.6), thus making it as serious to curse parents as to strike them. **22–25:** This *lex talionis* (see Lev.24.20) was not an expression of vengeance but a limitation upon measureless vengeance.

ransom is laid on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is laid upon him.³¹ If it gores a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule.³² If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

33 "When a man leaves a pit open, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or an ass falls into it,³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make it good; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

35 "When one man's ox hurts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide the price of it; and the dead beast also they shall divide.³⁶ Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall pay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.

22ⁱ "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.^j He shall make restitution; if he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.⁴ If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or an ass or a sheep, he shall pay double.

2^k "If a thief is found breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood-guilt for him;³ but if the sun has risen upon him, there shall be bloodguilt for him.

5 "When a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

6 "When fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he that kindled the fire shall make full restitution.

7 "If a man delivers to his neighbor money or goods to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double.⁸ If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God, to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor's goods.

9 "For every breach of trust, whether it is for ox, for ass, for sheep, for clothing, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, 'This is it,' the case of both parties shall come before God; he whom God shall condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

10 "If a man delivers to his neighbor an ass or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep, and it dies or is hurt or is driven away, without any one seeing it,¹¹ an oath by the LORD shall be between them both to see whether he has not put his hand to his neighbor's property; and the owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution.¹² But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner.¹³ If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence; he shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

14 "If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is hurt or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution.¹⁵ If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hire.^l

16 "If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed, and lies with her, he shall give the marriage present for her, and make her his wife.¹⁷ If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equivalent to the marriage present for virgins.

ⁱ Ch 21.37 in Heb

^j Restoring the second half of verse 3 with 4 to their place immediately following verse 1

^k Ch 22.1 in Heb

^l Or it is reckoned in (Heb comes into) its hire

21.33–22.17: Laws dealing with property. 33–36: These laws establish responsibility in cases of carelessness. **22:1–4:** Case laws regulating stealing. **2–3:** These verses may mean that if the invader is caught in the act (at night) he may be slain with impunity, but if he is slain in broad daylight there is blood guilt. **5–6:** Cases of neglect. **7–15:** Cases involving trusteeship. **9:** *Before God* (v. 8), i.e. to the sanctuary (possibly to the doorpost; 21.6) for an oracular decision or the sacred oath (v. 11; 1 Kg.8.31–32). **16–17:** This law is included here because it deals with a financial matter, the *marriage present* (Dt.22.29). Laws concerning sexual relations are found in Dt.22.13–30.

18 "You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

19 "Whoever lies with a beast shall be put to death.

20 "Whoever sacrifices to any god, save to the LORD only, shall be utterly destroyed.

21 "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. ²² You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. ²³ If you do afflict them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry; ²⁴ and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

25 "If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be to him as a creditor, and you shall not exact interest from him. ²⁶ If ever you take your neighbor's garment in pledge, you shall restore it to him before the sun goes down; ²⁷ for that is his only covering, it is his mantle for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

28 "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

29 "You shall not delay to offer from the fulness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses.

"The first-born of your sons you shall give to me. ³⁰ You shall do likewise with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its dam; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

31 "You shall be men consecrated to me; therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall cast it to the dogs.

23 "You shall not utter a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked

man, to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; nor shall you bear witness in a suit, turning aside after a multitude, so as to pervert justice; ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his suit.

4 "If you meet your enemy's ox or his ass going astray, you shall bring it back to him. ⁵ If you see the ass of one who hates you lying under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it, you shall help him to lift it up.^m

6 "You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his suit. ⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not slay the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. ⁸ And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the officials, and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

9 "You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

10 "For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield; ¹¹ but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild beasts may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

12 "Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your ass may have rest, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien, may be refreshed. ¹³ Take heed to all that I have said to you; and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let such be heard out of your mouth.

l Or it is reckoned in (Heb comes into) its hire
m Gk: Heb obscure

22.18–23.9: Miscellaneous social and cultic laws. The laws of vv. 18–20 (compare 21.12,15–17) are in the unconditional style of the Decalogue. **20:** Compare 20.3; Dt.13.12–18. **21–27:** Israel's God is the protector of the legally defenseless: the stranger (sojourner), orphan, widow, and poor. **25:** Being a farming people, Israel frowned upon the mercantile way of life (Hos.12.7–8) and specifically upon the exaction of interest from a fellow-Israelite (Lev.25.35–38). **26:** A loan with a garment as security could only be for the day, lest a poor man suffer (Dt.24.12–13; Am.2.8). **28:** Lev.24.15–16; 2 Sam.16.9; 1 Kg.2.8–9; 21.10. **29–30:** See 13.2 n. **31:** Flesh torn by beasts was regarded as unclean because it was not properly drained of blood (Lev.7.24; 17.15). **23.1–9:** Laws expounding Israel's sense of justice. **4–5:** Justice extends even to helping *your enemy* (Dt.22.1–4).

23.10–19: A cultic calendar (34.18–26; Lev.23.1–44; Dt.16.1–17). **10–11:** See Lev.25.2–7. **12:** Here the observance of the sabbath is based upon humanitarian concern (compare 20.11). **14–17:** This law reflects the practice of

14 "Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. 15 You shall keep the feast of unleavened bread; as I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. 16 You shall keep the feast of harvest, of the first fruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the feast of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. 17 Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

18 "You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

19 "The first of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

"You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

20 "Behold, I send an angel before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. 21 Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him.

22 "But if you hearken attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

23 "When my angel goes before you, and brings you in to the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Per'izzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites, and I blot them

out, 24 you shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. 25 You shall serve the LORD your God, and Iⁿ will bless your bread and your water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of you. 26 None shall cast her young or be barren in your land; I will fulfil the number of your days. 27 I will send my terror before you, and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. 28 And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out Hivite, Canaanite, and Hittite from before you. 29 I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. 30 Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you are increased and possess the land. 31 And I will set your bounds from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphra'tes; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. 32 You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. 33 They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."

24 And he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abi'hu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship afar off. 2 Moses alone shall come

n Gk Vg: Heb he

making a pilgrimage to the central sanctuary of the tribal confederacy (1 Sam.1.3,21). **15:** *Empty-handed*, i.e. without a gift of the first fruits of the barley harvest. **16:** *The feast of harvest*, i.e. the feast of weeks (or pentecost, see Lev.23.15–21 n.) which was celebrated at the time of the wheat harvest (June). The third feast, *the feast of ingathering*, or feast of booths, was celebrated *at the end of the year* (autumn), according to the old agricultural calendar (see 12.2 n.), when fruit, grapes, and olives were harvested. **17:** According to ancient practice, men were the chief participants in the cult (34.23; see 10.7–11 n.). **18–19:** 34.25–26. The prohibition against seething a kid in its mother's milk (Dt.14.21) is a protest against a Canaanite method of preparing a sacrifice.

23.20–33: The conclusion to the Covenant Code (beginning 20.22). **20–21:** The *angel* is the LORD himself (14.19; see Gen.16.7 n.). On *the name*, see Gen.32.27 n. **27.28:** Here the language of "holy war" is used. *Terror*, Gen.35.5 n. The term *hornets* apparently is used figuratively to portray the panic aroused in holy war (Dt.7.20; Jos.24.12 n.).

24.1–18: The ceremony of covenant ratification. **1–2:** This tradition is continued in vv. 9–11. *Moses alone*, an indication of Moses' special role as covenant mediator (19.9; 20.19). **3–8:** The first version of the covenant ceremony

near to the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."

3 Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do." ⁴ And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. ⁶ And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." ⁸ And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."

9 Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abi'hu, and seventy of the elders of Israel

went up, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. ¹¹ And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

12 The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tables of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." ¹³ So Moses rose with his servant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴ And he said to the elders, "Tarry here for us, until we come to you again; and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a cause, let him go to them."

15 Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸ And Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

stresses the people's participation (19.10–15). **3:** *The words*, i.e. the Decalogue; *the ordinances*, i.e. the laws of the Covenant Code (see 21.1 n.). **4:** The participation of all the people is symbolized by *twelve pillars*, one for each tribe. **5:** On the types of sacrifice, see Lev. chs. 1 and 3. **6–8:** The ritual dramatizes the uniting of the two parties: the LORD, whose presence is represented by the altar, and the people. Compare the ancient covenant ceremony found in Gen. ch. 15. **7:** *The book of the covenant* (Jos.24.25–26) apparently contained the covenant laws, here tacitly identified with *the words* and *the ordinances* (v. 3). **8:** *The blood of the covenant* (compare Mt.26.28; 1 Cor.11.25) reflects the ancient view that blood was efficacious in establishing community between God and man (see Lev.1.5 n.). **9–11:** The second version of the covenant ceremony (continuing vv. 1–2). **9:** The people did not take part but were represented by the seventy *elders* or *chief men*. Moses, the covenant mediator, was accompanied by the priestly family, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu (6.14–25; Lev. 10.1–3). **10:** The leaders did not see God directly; they saw only the lower part of his heavenly throne-room — the sapphire pavement (the firmament) above which the LORD was enthroned (compare Is.6.1; Ezek.1.1,26–28). **11:** Unharmful by divine holiness (see 3.6 n.), the leaders partook of the covenant meal (18.12). **12–14:** A separate tradition about the gift of *the tables of stone* on which the Decalogue was written (32.15; 34.28; Dt.9.9,11,15). **14:** 18.16. This verse sets the stage for the episode of ch. 32. *Hur*, see 17.10 n. **15–18:** This theophany introduces the priestly material of chs. 25–31, which apparently has replaced the early tradition about Moses making the ark and putting the tables of law in it (Dt.10.1–5). *The glory*, see 16.6–7 n.

Reading 6

THE BOOK OF JOB

The book of Job does not attempt to explain the mystery of suffering or to “justify the ways of God with men.” It aims at probing the depths of faith in spite of suffering. The ancient folktale of a patient Job (1.1–2.13; 42.7–17; Jas. 5.11) circulated orally among oriental sages in the second millennium B.C. and was probably written down in Hebrew at the time of David and Solomon or a century later (about 1000–800 B.C.). An anonymous poet of the Exile sixth century B.C. used it as a setting for the discussion between an impatient Job and his three friends (3.1–31.40) and the Lord’s discourses from the whirlwind (38.1–42.6). A later poet contributed Elihu’s speeches (32.1–37.24).

The storyteller asked, “Does [man] fear God for nought?” (1.9). The poet echoed the question, “What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit do we get if we pray to him?” (21.15). Unlike the hero of the folktale who is rewarded materially for his virtues, the Job of the poem demands justice, and his final challenge shows that he regards religion and morality as man’s claim for happiness (29.1–31.40). Job renounces his defiance only after the Lord asks, “Will you condemn me that you may be justified?” (40.8). Job is satisfied without self-vindication by an experience of immediate communion with God, not unlike that of the great prophets: “Now my eye sees thee” (42.5).

In the poetic language of the book, God is at work in the universe, even “to bring rain on a land where no man is” (38.26), and he is aware of evil (personified by the monsters Behemoth and Leviathan, 40.15–41.34). At the same time, he cares for Job so fully that he reveals himself personally to him and shares with him the vision of his cosmic responsibilities. A God who confesses his burdens to man is a God who is profoundly involved in the destiny of man. He is not an impassive force. In the presence of holiness and creative love, virtuous man surrenders his pride in adoration. In his own way the poet conveyed a view of sin which transcends morality, the awareness of which is possible only in the context of faith.

THERE WAS A MAN IN THE LAND OF UZ, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God, and turned away from evil.² There were born to him seven sons and three daughters.³ He had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and very many servants; so that this man was the greatest of all the people of the east.⁴ His sons used to go and hold a feast in the house of each on his day; and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.⁵ And when the days of the feast had run their course, Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did continually.

6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan^a also came among them.⁷ The LORD said to Satan, "Whence have you come?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."⁸ And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nought?¹⁰ Hast thou not put a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land."¹¹ But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse thee to thy face."¹² And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon him-

self do not put forth your hand." So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house;¹⁴ and there came a messenger to Job, and said, "The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding beside them;¹⁵ and the Sabe'ans fell upon them and took them, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you."¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants, and consumed them; and I alone have escaped to tell you."¹⁷ While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "The Chalde'-ans formed three companies, and made a raid upon the camels and took them, and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you."¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came another, and said, "Your sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house;¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came across the wilderness, and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young people, and they are dead; and I alone have escaped to tell you."

20 Then Job arose, and rent his robe, and shaved his head, and fell upon the ground, and worshiped.²¹ And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

22 In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong.

2 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before
a Heb the adversary

1.1-2.13: The prologue. A blameless man is deprived of wealth, posterity, and health, but keeps his faith in God. 1: The land of Uz is probably Edom, although some locate it in north Transjordan. The name Job may mean "hostile" or "penitent." Blameless, i.e. healthy, whole, and socially responsible. 6-8: Satan (see note a; Zech.3.1 n.) is among the sons of God. He is not yet the demonic personification of later Judaism (compare 1 Chr.21.1) and Christianity. 15: Sabeans, nomads from Arabia. 17: Chaldeans, originally from southern Mesopotamia. The folk-teller respects archaic and local color. 21: Naked shall I return, Hebrew adds "there," suggesting correspondence between mother's womb and "mother earth." Although a foreigner, Job uses the covenant-name, Yahweh (the LORD); this is an indication of early date. In the poem, the sacred name Yahweh is never used by the speakers (except in 12.9, a proverbial quotation). 22: The Deity is not accused of capricious malevolence. 2.4: Skin for skin, a hide for a hide, a proverb probably

the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.² And the LORD said to Satan, "Whence have you come?" Satan answered the LORD, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."³ And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you moved me against him, to destroy him without cause."⁴ Then Satan answered the LORD, "Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life."⁵ But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face."⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your power; only spare his life."

⁷ So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD, and afflicted Job with loathsome sores from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.⁸ And he took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes.

⁹ Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God, and die."¹⁰ But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

¹¹ Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eli'phaz the Te'manite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Na'amathite. They made an appointment together to come to condole with him and comfort him.¹² And when they saw him from afar, they did not recognize him; and they raised their voices and wept; and they rent their robes and sprinkled dust upon their

heads toward heaven.¹³ And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3 After this Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth.² And Job said:

³ "Let the day perish wherein I was born,
and the night which said,
'A man-child is conceived.'

⁴ Let that day be darkness!
May God above not seek it,
nor light shine upon it.

⁵ Let gloom and deep darkness claim it.
Let clouds dwell upon it;
let the blackness of the day terrify it.

⁶ That night — let thick darkness seize it!
let it not rejoice among the days
of the year,
let it not come into the number
of the months.

⁷ Yea, let that night be barren;
let no joyful cry be heard^b in it.

⁸ Let those curse it who curse the day,
who are skilled to rouse up Leviathan.

⁹ Let the stars of its dawn be dark;
let it hope for light, but have none,
nor see the eyelids of the morning;

¹⁰ because it did not shut the doors of my
mother's womb,
nor hide trouble from my eyes.

¹¹ "Why did I not die at birth,
come forth from the womb and expire?

¹² Why did the knees receive me?
Or why the breasts, that I should suck?

¹³ For then I should have lain down and been
quiet;

I should have slept; then I should have
been at rest,

b Heb *come*

used by tradesmen. **7:** *Loathsome sores*, not necessarily leprosy (Hansen's disease) but a skin ailment, one of many in the Near East. **9:** *Curse God, and die*, Job's wife still believed in his *integrity* (see 4.6 n.) but wished to shorten his torture. **10:** *Foolish women*, i.e. those who do not believe in divine intervention into human affairs (see Ps.14.1 n.). **11:** The friends of Job came from northwest Arabia.

3.1–26: Job's soliloquy. **8:** Those *who are skilled to rouse Leviathan* are magicians, astrologers, and calendar-makers who were believed to produce as well as announce eclipses. *Leviathan*, the sea monster (7.12), like Rahab (9.13; 26.12; Is.51.9), threatens to engulf the created order and the succession of days and nights, especially during

- 14 with kings and counselors of the earth
who rebuilt ruins for themselves,
15 or with princes who had gold,
who filled their houses with silver.
16 Or why was I not as a hidden untimely
birth,
as infants that never see the light?
17 There the wicked cease from troubling,
and there the weary are at rest.
18 There the prisoners are at ease together;
they hear not the voice of the task-
master.
19 The small and the great are there,
and the slave is free from his master.
20 "Why is light given to him that is in
misery,
and life to the bitter in soul,
21 who long for death, but it comes not,
and dig for it more than for hid
treasures;
22 who rejoice exceedingly,
and are glad, when they find the grave?
23 Why is light given to a man whose way
is hid,
whom God has hedged in?
24 For my sighing comes as^c my bread,
and my groanings are poured out like
water.
25 For the thing that I fear comes upon me,
and what I dread befalls me.
26 I am not at ease, nor am I quiet;
I have no rest; but trouble comes."

4 Then Eli'phaz the Te'manite
answered:

- 2 "If one ventures a word with you, will you
be offended?
Yet who can keep from speaking?
3 Behold, you have instructed many,

and you have strengthened the weak
hands.

- 4 Your words have upheld him who was
stumbling,
and you have made firm the feeble knees.
5 But now it has come to you, and you are
impatient;
it touches you, and you are dismayed.
6 Is not your fear of God your confidence,
and the integrity of your ways your
hope?
7 "Think now, who that was innocent ever
perished?
Or where were the upright cut off?
8 As I have seen, those who plow iniquity
and sow trouble reap the same.
9 By the breath of God they perish,
and by the blast of his anger they are
consumed.
10 The roar of the lion, the voice of the fierce
lion,
the teeth of the young lions, are broken.
11 The strong lion perishes for lack of prey,
and the whelps of the lioness are
scattered.
12 "Now a word was brought to me stealthily,
my ear received the whisper of it.
13 Amid thoughts from visions of the night,
when deep sleep falls on men,
14 dread came upon me, and trembling,
which made all my bones shake.
15 A spirit glided past my face;
the hair of my flesh stood up.
16 It stood still,
but I could not discern its appearance.
A form was before my eyes;
there was silence, then I heard a voice:
c Heb before

eclipses of the sun or moon. **14:** *Ruins*, probably pyramids. The thought of a happy afterlife is not Hebraic but Egyptian. **23:** *God*, Hebrew Eloah, a name which stresses the terrible aspect of the Deity, whose omnipotence is never doubted by Job. Job's dilemma is directly related to his theological view that God is the cause of both good and evil (disaster, calamities, etc.); see 2.10; Is.45.7; Am.3.6.

4.1-5.27: First discourse of Eliphaz. 1-4: The opening words are courteous. The poet insists on the sincerity of Job's comforters. **6:** Job's *integrity* (Hebrew word related to "blameless" in 1.1; see 2.9 n.) is not yet questioned. **7:** The dogma of individual, this-worldly retribution is upheld. **12-16:** Eliphaz appeals to a supranatural, almost prophetic, source of authority. He does not speak in the name of tradition or experience, as wise men generally do. **17:** Surely no mortal man is righteous before God, and Job should adopt an attitude of humility instead of rebelling

17 'Can mortal man be righteous before^d God?
Can a man be pure before^d his Maker?
18 Even in his servants he puts no trust,
and his angels he charges with error;
19 how much more those who dwell in houses
of clay,
whose foundation is in the dust,
who are crushed before the moth.
20 Between morning and evening they are
destroyed;
they perish for ever without any
regarding it.
21 If their tent-cord is plucked up within
them,
do they not die, and that without
wisdom?'

5 "Call now; is there any one who will
answer you?
To which of the holy ones will you turn?
2 Surely vexation kills the fool,
and jealousy slays the simple.
3 I have seen the fool taking root,
but suddenly I cursed his dwelling.
4 His sons are far from safety,
they are crushed in the gate,
and there is no one to deliver them.
5 His harvest the hungry eat,
and he takes it even out of thorns;^e
and the thirsty^f pant after his^g wealth.
6 For affliction does not come from the dust,
nor does trouble sprout from the
ground;
7 but man is born to trouble
as the sparks fly upward.
8 "As for me, I would seek God,
and to God would I commit my cause;
9 who does great things and unsearchable,
marvelous things without number:
10 he gives rain upon the earth
and sends waters upon the fields;

11 he sets on high those who are lowly,
and those who mourn are lifted to safety.
12 He frustrates the devices of the crafty,
so that their hands achieve no success.
13 He takes the wise in their own craftiness;
and the schemes of the wily are brought
to a quick end.
14 They meet with darkness in the daytime,
and grope at noonday as in the night.
15 But he saves the fatherless from their mouth,^h
the needy from the hand of the mighty.
16 So the poor have hope,
and injustice shuts her mouth.
17 "Behold, happy is the man whom God
reproves;
therefore despise not the chastening of
the Almighty.
18 For he wounds, but he binds up;
he smites, but his hands heal.
19 He will deliver you from six troubles;
in seven there shall no evil touch you.
20 In famine he will redeem you from death,
and in war from the power of the sword.
21 You shall be hid from the scourge of the
tongue,
and shall not fear destruction when it
comes.
22 At destruction and famine you shall laugh,
and shall not fear the beasts of the earth.
23 For you shall be in league with the stones
of the field,
and the beasts of the field shall be at
peace with you.
24 You shall know that your tent is safe,
and you shall inspect your fold and miss
nothing.
25 You shall know also that your descendants
shall be many,

d Or *more than* *e* Heb *obscure* *f* Aquila Symmachus
Syr Vg: Heb *snare* *g* Heb *their* *h* Cn: Heb *uncertain*

against the divine will. 21: The word translated *tent-cord* has two separate meanings; here it should be translated "pre-eminence" or "excellency"; men's pre-eminence or excellency is of no avail. They have only an illusion of *wisdom*. 5.1: *The holy ones*, divine beings (see 15.15; Ex. 15.11 n.; Ps. 82.1 n.); members of the heavenly court cannot be intercessors. Eliphaz suspects, perhaps, that Job has attempted to justify himself by invoking other gods. 8: *I would*, that is, were I in Job's place; if Job would only turn from his arrogance, his present misery would be ended. 17–27: Suffering must be accepted as *the chastening of the Almighty*. The poet refers to the doctrine of *musar* (chastening or correction), which is characteristic of Jewish orthodoxy.

- and your offspring as the grass of the earth.
- 26 You shall come to your grave in ripe old age,
as a shock of grain comes up to the threshing floor in its season.
- 27 Lo, this we have searched out; it is true.
Hear, and know it for your good.ⁱ
- 6 Then Job answered:
2 "O that my vexation were weighed,
and all my calamity laid in the balances!
3 For then it would be heavier than the sand of the sea;
therefore my words have been rash.
4 For the arrows of the Almighty are in me;
my spirit drinks their poison;
the terrors of God are arrayed against me.
5 Does the wild ass bray when he has grass,
or the ox low over his fodder?
6 Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt,
or is there any taste in the slime of the purslane?^j
7 My appetite refuses to touch them;
they are as food that is loathsome to me.^k
8 "O that I might have my request,
and that God would grant my desire;
9 that it would please God to crush me,
that he would let loose his hand and cut me off!
10 This would be my consolation;
I would even exult^l in pain unsparing;
for I have not denied the words of the Holy One.
11 What is my strength, that I should wait?
And what is my end, that I should be patient?
- 12 Is my strength the strength of stones,
or is my flesh bronze?
13 In truth I have no help in me,
and any resource is driven from me.
14 "He who withholds^m kindness from a friend
forsakes the fear of the Almighty.
15 My brethren are treacherous as a torrent-bed,
as freshets that pass away,
16 which are dark with ice,
and where the snow hides itself.
17 In time of heat they disappear;
when it is hot, they vanish from their place.
18 The caravans turn aside from their course;
they go up into the waste, and perish.
19 The caravans of Tema look,
the travelers of Sheba hope.
20 They are disappointed because they were confident;
they come thither and are confounded.
21 Such you have now become to me;ⁿ
you see my calamity, and are afraid.
22 Have I said, 'Make me a gift'?
Or, 'From your wealth offer a bribe for me'?
23 Or, 'Deliver me from the adversary's hand'?
Or, 'Ransom me from the hand of oppressors'?
24 "Teach me, and I will be silent;
make me understand how I have erred.
25 How forceful are honest words!
But what does reproof from you reprove?
- i* Heb for yourself *j* The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain *k* Heb obscure *l* The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain *m* Syr Vg Compare Tg: Heb obscure *n* Cn Compare Gk Syr: Heb obscure

6.1–7.21: Reply of Job. The orthodox explanation cannot be valid in Job's case, for his *calamity* exceeds all ordinary misfortunes. **6:** *Slime of the purslane*, an insipid and repulsive food. Purslane is a potherb. **8–11:** The Egyptian theme of desire for an early death reappears (see ch. 3). Moreover Job fears that, if his days (and hence, his tortures) are prolonged, he may deny *the words of the Holy One* (v. 10). The poet suggests thereby the complexity of the hero's personality; Job is an unwilling blasphemer. **14:** The test of true religion lies in human compassion for others. Another rendering is: "A man should show kindness to a man in despair, even to one who forsakes the fear of the Almighty." Some commentators suggest that the verse is a marginal note made by a scribe. **15–20:** Friendship fails precisely when it is needed. **24:** Job is willing to admit that he has *erred*, if only convincing evidence is brought forward. **30:** His con-

²⁶ Do you think that you can reprove words,
when the speech of a despairing man is
wind?

²⁷ You would even cast lots over the fatherless,
and bargain over your friend.

²⁸ "But now, be pleased to look at me;
for I will not lie to your face.

²⁹ Turn, I pray, let no wrong be done.
Turn now, my vindication is at stake.

³⁰ Is there any wrong on my tongue?
Cannot my taste discern calamity?

7 "Has not man a hard service upon earth,
and are not his days like the days of a
hireling?

² Like a slave who longs for the shadow,
and like a hireling who looks for his
wages,

³ so I am allotted months of emptiness,
and nights of misery are apportioned
to me.

⁴ When I lie down I say, 'When shall I arise?'
But the night is long,
and I am full of tossing till the dawn.

⁵ My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;
my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.

⁶ My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle,
and come to their end without hope.

⁷ "Remember that my life is a breath;
my eye will never again see good.

⁸ The eye of him who sees me will behold
me no more;
while thy eyes are upon me, I shall be
gone.

⁹ As the cloud fades and vanishes,

so he who goes down to Sheol does not
come up;

¹⁰ he returns no more to his house,
nor does his place know him any more.

¹¹ "Therefore I will not restrain my mouth;
I will speak in the anguish of my spirit;
I will complain in the bitterness of my
soul.

¹² Am I the sea, or a sea monster,
that thou settest a guard over me?

¹³ When I say, 'My bed will comfort me,
my couch will ease my complaint,'

¹⁴ then thou dost scare me with dreams
and terrify me with visions,

¹⁵ so that I would choose strangling
and death rather than my bones.

¹⁶ I loathe my life; I would not live for ever.
Let me alone, for my days are a breath.

¹⁷ What is man, that thou dost make so much
of him,

and that thou dost set thy mind upon him,
¹⁸ dost visit him every morning,
and test him every moment?

¹⁹ How long wilt thou not look away from
me,
nor let me alone till I swallow my
spittle?

²⁰ If I sin, what do I do to thee, thou watcher
of men?

Why hast thou made me thy mark?

Why have I become a burden to thee?

²¹ Why dost thou not pardon my transgression
and take away my iniquity?

For now I shall lie in the earth;
thou wilt seek me, but I shall not be."

science, however, is able to *discern* the right of his case. **7.1–6:** The life of mortal man in general is comparable to that of a *slave who longs for the shadow*; moreover, its transient nature is the source of new anguish. **7–21:** A prayer. It is at the moment of despair that man begins to pray. **7–9:** *Remember that my life is a breath.* Job appeals to divine compassion with the implied mockery that God will act when it will be too late. Job has heard of foreign speculations on the descent of men and gods to the underworld, only to deny any return from there. **12:** *Am I the sea, or a sea monster?* Again the hero alludes to the personification of evil (see 3.8 n.) in a context of sarcastic humor. Job compares himself in jest to the primeval forces which in Semitic polytheism threaten the security of the inhabited earth. His pain and his destitution are likened to the watch or *guard* which Marduk posted around the conquered dragon in the Babylonian poem on creation. **17–18:** A parody of Ps. 8. While the psalmist praised the creator who assigns to insignificant and mortal man a place of pre-eminence in nature, Job ironically prefers to receive minimal attention (see also Ps. 144.3–4). **20:** Human sin cannot justify God's hostility to man. **21:** *Thou wilt seek me*, i.e. thou wilt grope in the darkness after me, *but I shall not be*. Job threatens the Almighty with his own non-being! He at once reaffirms his former trust in a loving God and sarcastically implies the frustration of that love.

40 And the LORD said to Job:
 2 "Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?

He who argues with God, let him answer it."

3 Then Job answered the LORD:

4 "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer thee?

I lay my hand on my mouth.

5 I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further."

6 Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind:

7 "Gird up your loins like a man;

I will question you, and you declare to me.

8 Will you even put me in the wrong?

Will you condemn me that you may be justified?

9 Have you an arm like God, and can you thunder with a voice like his?

10 "Deck yourself with majesty and dignity; clothe yourself with glory and splendor.

11 Pour forth the overflowings of your anger, and look on every one that is proud, and abase him.

12 Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked where they stand.

13 Hide them all in the dust together; bind their faces in the world below."

14 Then will I also acknowledge to you, that your own right hand can give you victory.

15 "Behold, Be'hemoth,^o which I made as I made you; he eats grass like an ox.

16 Behold, his strength in his loins, and his power in the muscles of his belly.

17 He makes his tail stiff like a cedar; the sinews of his thighs are knit together.

18 His bones are tubes of bronze, his limbs like bars of iron.

19 "He is the first of the works^p of God; let him who made him bring near his sword!

20 For the mountains yield food for him where all the wild beasts play.

21 Under the lotus plants he lies, in the covert of the reeds and in the marsh.

22 For his shade the lotus trees cover him; the willows of the brook surround him.

23 Behold, if the river is turbulent he is not frightened; he is confident though Jordan rushes against his mouth.

24 Can one take him with hooks,^q or pierce his nose with a snare?

41^r "Can you draw out Levi'athan^s with a fishhook, or press down his tongue with a cord?

2 Can you put a rope in his nose, or pierce his jaw with a hook?

3 Will he make many supplications to you? Will he speak to you soft words?

4 Will he make a covenant with you to take him for your servant for ever?

5 Will you play with him as with a bird, or will you put him on leash for your maidens?

6 Will traders bargain over him? Will they divide him up among the merchants?

7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons, or his head with fishing spears?

8 Lay hands on him;

n Heb *hidden place* *o* Or *the hippopotamus*

p Heb *ways* *q* Cn: Heb *in his eyes*

r Ch 40.25 in Heb *s* Or *the crocodile*

40.1-5: Job refuses the challenge to fight. 1: *Shall a faultfinder contend with the Almighty?* Read, with some ancient versions, "Will he who disputes with the Almighty yield?" The Deity never condemns Job for moral faults but clearly implies that he has been guilty of theological insolence.

40.6-41.34: Second discourse of the LORD. 40.6-9: The divine challenge of man is renewed, apparently because Job is only silenced but not convinced. 8: *Will you condemn me that you may be justified?* The poet indicates here the

think of the battle; you will not do it again!

^{9t} Behold, the hope of a man is disappointed; he is laid low even at the sight of him.

¹⁰ No one is so fierce that he dares to stir him up.
Who then is he that can stand before me?

¹¹ Who has given to me,^u that I should repay him?
Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.

¹² "I will not keep silence concerning his limbs,
or his mighty strength, or his goodly frame.

¹³ Who can strip off his outer garment?
Who can penetrate his double coat of mail?"^v

¹⁴ Who can open the doors of his face?
Round about his teeth is terror.

¹⁵ His back^w is made of rows of shields,
shut up closely as with a seal.

¹⁶ One is so near to another
that no air can come between them.

¹⁷ They are joined one to another;
they clasp each other and cannot be separated.

¹⁸ His sneezings flash forth light,
and his eyes are like the eyelids of the dawn.

¹⁹ Out of his mouth go flaming torches;
sparks of fire leap forth.

²⁰ Out of his nostrils comes forth smoke,
as from a boiling pot and burning rushes.

²¹ His breath kindles coals,
and a flame comes forth from his mouth.

²² In his neck abides strength,
and terror dances before him.

²³ The folds of his flesh cleave together,
firmly cast upon him and immovable.

²⁴ His heart is hard as a stone,
hard as the nether millstone.

²⁵ When he raises himself up the mighty^x are afraid;
at the crashing they are beside themselves.

²⁶ Though the sword reaches him, it does not avail;
nor the spear, the dart, or the javelin.

²⁷ He counts iron as straw,
and bronze as rotten wood.

²⁸ The arrow cannot make him flee;
for him slingstones are turned to stubble.

²⁹ Clubs are counted as stubble;
he laughs at the rattle of javelins.

³⁰ His underparts are like sharp potsherds;
he spreads himself like a threshing sledge on the mire.

³¹ He makes the deep boil like a pot;
he makes the sea like a pot of ointment.

³² Behind him he leaves a shining wake;
one would think the deep to be hoary.

³³ Upon earth there is not his like,
a creature without fear.

³⁴ He beholds everything that is high;
he is king over all the sons of pride."

42² Then Job answered the LORD:
"I know that thou canst do all things,
and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted.

^t Ch 41.1 in Heb ^u The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain ^v Gk: Heb *bridle* ^w Cn Compare Gk Vg: Heb *pride* ^x Or *gods*

central theme of the work. Self-righteousness leads man to condemn God. **15–24:** This portrait of *Behemoth* (like that of *Leviathan*, 41.1–34) may have received literary amplification, but it plays an integral part of the poet's purpose: the creating God is in control of all forces of evil, despite appearances to the contrary. **15:** The primeval monster (compare v. 19) is not a mere hippopotamus, but a mythical symbol. *Which I made as I made you*, the mystery of evil is not dissolved, but the divine sway embraces all. **41.1–34:** *Leviathan*, not an ordinary crocodile, but the sea-monster (3.8; 26.13; Ps.74.14), which was associated with chaos. Like the psalmist (Ps.104.26), the poet shows that it is only a play-thing in the eyes of God.

42.1–6: The answer of Job. Having contemplated divine activity, the sufferer now knows the purposefulness of God (v. 2). **3a:** A quotation from 38.2; Job acknowledges his finitude. **4:** An echo of the divine questioning (40.7),

3 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?'

Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand,
things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

4 'Hear, and I will speak;

I will question you, and you declare to me.'

5 I had heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,

but now my eye sees thee;

6 therefore I despise myself,
and repent in dust and ashes."

7 After the LORD had spoken these words to Job, the LORD said to Eli'phaz the Te'manite: "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has. ⁸ Now therefore take seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you, for I will accept his prayer not to deal with you according to your folly; for you have not spoken of me what is right, as my servant Job has." ⁹ So Eli'phaz the Te'manite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Na'amathite went and did

what the LORD had told them; and the LORD accepted Job's prayer.

10 And the LORD restored the fortunes of Job, when he had prayed for his friends; and the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. ¹¹ Then came to him all his brothers and sisters and all who had known him before, and ate bread with him in his house; and they showed him sympathy and comforted him for all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him; and each of them gave him a piece of money^y and a ring of gold. ¹² And the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; and he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses. ¹³ He had also seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴ And he called the name of the first Jemi'mah; and the name of the second Kezi'ah; and the name of the third Ker'en-hap'puch. ¹⁵ And in all the land there were no women so fair as Job's daughters; and their father gave them inheritance among their brothers. ¹⁶ And after this Job lived a hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, four generations. ¹⁷ And Job died, an old man, and full of days.

y Heb *qesitah*

preparing for the confession of the following lines. **5:** The contrast between belief through tradition and faith through prophetic vision. God has not justified Job, but he has come to him personally; the upholder of the universe cares for a lonely man so deeply that he offers him the fullness of his communion. Job is not vindicated but he has obtained far more than a recognition of his innocence: he has been accepted by the ever-present master-worker, and intimacy with the Creator makes vindication superfluous. The philosophical problem is not solved, but it is transfigured by the theological reality of the divine-human rapport. **6:** *I despise myself*; the Hebrew verb is obscure, but is probably related to a root meaning "to melt into nothing." *I repent*, the Hebrew verb used here is not the usual one for repentance of sins, but a word expressing the utmost grief and self-depreciation. Such an experience follows rather than precedes the vision of God.

42.7-17: The epilogue. The style, language, and situation of the folktale (1.1-2.13) reappear abruptly (see Introduction). **8:** *Burnt offering*, sacrificial ritual, absent from the poem, is a characteristic of the archaic story (1.5). **10:** Job's restoration follows not his repentance but his intercession on behalf of his friends (v. 8). Intercessory power is a feature which is in accord with the figure of the ancient legend (Ezek.14.14,20). **10-17:** Job receives a double restitution, although no healing of his disease is explicitly mentioned. **11:** *A piece of money*, a *qesitah* (see note y and Gen.33.19; Jos.24.32). **14:** The names of Job's new daughters have a flavor of folklore: *Jemimah*, Dove; *Keziah*, Cinnamon; *Keren-happuch*, Horn of eye-shadow. **15b:** An exceptional procedure (contrast Num.27.1-11). **16-17:** A patriarchal theme (Gen.25.8; 35.29; 50.23; see also Ps.128.6; Pr.17.6; 1 Chr.29.28).

Reading 7

THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

The prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, proclaimed his message to Judah and Jerusalem between 742 and 687 B.C., that critical period in which the Northern Kingdom was annexed to the Assyrian empire (2 Kg. ch. 17) while Judah lived uneasily in its shadow as a tributary (2 Chr.28.21). Nothing is known about the early life of the prophet, although it has been conjectured from certain aspects of his message and from Is.6.1–8 that he may have been a priest.

Only chs. 1–39 can be assigned to Isaiah's time; it is generally accepted that chs. 40–66 come from the time of Cyrus of Persia (539 B.C.) and later, as shown by the differences in historical background, literary style, and theological emphases. Isaiah I (chs. 1–39) begins with Isaiah's memoirs (1.1–12.6); it continues with oracles against foreign and domestic enemies (13.1–23.18); followed by the "Isaiah Apocalypse" (24.1–27.13). Oracles generally concerned with Judah's intrigue with Egypt, its implications and consequences (28.1–32.20), are followed by a short collection of post-exilic eschatological oracles (33.1–35.10). An historical appendix (36.1–39.8) completes the pre-exilic section, in which there are other additions and some rearranging of oracles by post-exilic editors.

In the tradition of Amos, Hosea, and Micah, contemporaries whose work he seems to know, Isaiah attacks social injustice as that which is most indicative of Judah's tenuous relationship with God. He exhorts his hearers to place their confidence in their omnipotent God and to lead public and private lives which manifest this. Thus justice and righteousness, teaching and word, and assurance of divine blessing upon the faithful and punishment upon the faithless are recurrent themes in his message from the Holy One of Israel to a proud and stubborn people.

Chapters 40–66, commonly called Second Isaiah (or Second and Third Isaiah), originated immediately before the fall of Babylon (October 29, 539 B.C.) to the armies of Cyrus, king of Persia, and during the generation following. The anonymous author of the first bipartite section (chs. 40–55 [40–48; 49–55]) exults in joyful anticipation of exiled Judah's restoration to Palestine, for which Cyrus is God's precipitating agent (44.28). Second Isaiah emphasizes the significance of historical events in God's plan, a plan which extends from creation to redemption — and beyond. Blindness to God's way is a cardinal sin in Second Isaiah. The author's interest in cosmogony was unique up to his time; it is used to emphasize the concept of God as exclusive creator and lord of all, whose ultimate glorious manifestation will be accompanied by a new creation.

This eschatological hope is shared with the author, or authors, of the second bipartite section (chs. 56–66 [56–59 and 63–66; 60–62]). The contents of this section (sometimes called

Third Isaiah) suggest a date between 530 and 510 B.C., perhaps contemporary with Haggai and Zechariah (520–518); chapters 60–62 may be later. Other concepts are also shared. Jacob and Israel have primarily religious, albeit national, significance. God's concern for the exiles in chs. 40–55 is paralleled by his comforting assurance to Zion's afflicted in chs. 56–66. But the direct "I-thou" relationship of Second Isaiah gives way to a more transcendent concept. In chs. 56–66 one is confronted by the sobering realities of life in the restored community. The Servant-motif vanishes, and there is growing emphasis on cultic matters.

Together these theologically significant sections present a moving vision of the assured hope of God's people in a world whose times are in God's hands. God's message to his responsible people is heard today as his covenant community, the church, redeemed by God through Jesus the Suffering Servant incarnate, proclaims to the world, "Arise, shine; for your light has come" (60.1).

THE VISION OF ISAIAH THE SON OF AMOZ,
which he saw concerning Judah and
Jerusalem in the days of Uzzi'ah, Jotham,
Ahaz, and Hezeki'ah, kings of Judah.

² Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth;
for the LORD has spoken:

"Sons have I reared and brought up,
but they have rebelled against me.

³ The ox knows its owner,
and the ass its master's crib;
but Israel does not know,
my people does not understand."

⁴ Ah, sinful nation,
a people laden with iniquity,
offspring of evildoers,
sons who deal corruptly!
They have forsaken the LORD,
they have despised the Holy One of
Israel,
they are utterly estranged.

⁵ Why will you still be smitten,
that you continue to rebel?

The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart faint.

⁴ From the sole of the foot even to the
head,

there is no soundness in it,
but bruises and sores

and bleeding wounds;
they are not pressed out, or bound up,
or softened with oil.

⁷ Your country lies desolate,
your cities are burned with fire;
in your very presence
aliens devour your land;
it is desolate, as overthrown by aliens.

⁸ And the daughter of Zion is left
like a booth in a vineyard,
like a lodge in a cucumber field,
like a besieged city.

⁹ If the LORD of hosts
had not left us a few survivors,
we should have been like Sodom,
and become like Gomor'rah.

1.1–5.24: Oracles against rebellious Judah. 1.1: Superscription. *Vision of Isaiah* (6.1–13; Jer. ch. 1; Ezek. chs. 1–3) identifies Is. chs. 1–39 as God's message to Judah through the prophet. The name *Isaiah* means "The LORD [Yahweh] gives salvation." The latter part of the verse beginning with "in the days of" may be an editorial expansion.

1.2–31: First series of oracles, serving as a kind of prologue. **2–3:** Poetic exhortation reminiscent of God's address to the heavenly host in 40.1–2. *Sons* compare Jer.3.19–22. The Biblical word *know* implies a profound, identifying comprehension of the right relationship with God; it is a recurring prophetic theme (Jer.1.5; Hos.2.20; 4.1,6; 5.4). **4–9:** An appeal to a people heedless of the significance of Judah's devastation by Tiglath-Pileser III (734–733 B.C.; 7.1–2) or Sennacherib (701 B.C.; 36.1) and Jerusalem's isolation (*daughter of Zion*, see Jer.4.29–31 n.). **4:** Note the poetic parallelism: *nation, people; offspring, sons*. The expression, *Holy One of Israel* (5.19,24; 10.20; 12.6; 17.7; 29.19; 30.11,12,15; 37.23), emphasizes God's unapproachable separateness, which he has bridged by his gracious

- ¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD,
you rulers of Sodom!
Give ear to the teaching of our God,
you people of Gomor'rah!
- ¹¹ "What to me is the multitude of your
sacrifices?
says the LORD;
I have had enough of burnt offerings of
rams
and the fat of fed beasts;
I do not delight in the blood of bulls,
or of lambs, or of he-goats.
- ¹² "When you come to appear before me,
who requires of you
this trampling of my courts?
- ¹³ Bring no more vain offerings;
incense is an abomination to me.
New moon and sabbath and the calling of
assemblies —
I cannot endure iniquity and solemn
assembly.
- ¹⁴ Your new moons and your appointed
feasts
my soul hates;
they have become a burden to me,
I am weary of bearing them.
- ¹⁵ When you spread forth your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.
- ¹⁶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;
cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;

- defend the fatherless,
plead for the widow.
- ¹⁸ "Come now, let us reason together,
says the LORD:
though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red like crimson,
they shall become like wool.
- ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient,
you shall eat the good of the land;
- ²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel,
you shall be devoured by the sword;
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- ²¹ How the faithful city
has become a harlot,
she that was full of justice!
Righteousness lodged in her,
but now murderers.
- ²² Your silver has become dross,
your wine mixed with water,
- ²³ Your princes are rebels
and companions of thieves.
Every one loves a bribe
and runs after gifts.
They do not defend the fatherless,
and the widow's cause does not come to
them.
- ²⁴ Therefore the Lord says,
the LORD of hosts,
the Mighty One of Israel:
"Ah, I will vent my wrath on my enemies,
and avenge myself on my foes.
- ²⁵ I will turn my hand against you
and will smelt away your dross as with
lye
and remove all your alloy.

election of Israel as his people (Hos.8.1, Jer.3.20). **10–20:** God's pronouncement concerning Judah's religious superficiality (Am.5.21–24; Jer.6.20). Judah may repent and return (Jer.7.5–7); the alternative is destruction (Jer.7.22–34). **10:** *Teaching*, the Hebrew word is "torah," which is frequently translated "law." On *Sodom and Gomorrah* see Gen.18.16–19.28; Jer.23.14; Ezek.16.46–58. **14:** *My soul*, a Hebrew idiom which in this context means "I" (compare Lev.26.11,30). *Burden*, see Jer.23.33–40. **16–17:** Compare Ex.22.21,22; Am.5.6–7. **18:** *Reason*, as one argues a case before a judge (Job 23.7). *White* for holiness (Rev.19.8); *scarlet* for wickedness (garments of Babylon, Rev.17.4). **21–23:** Lamentation over Jerusalem. **21:** *Harlot*, Jer.3.6–10; Ezek. chs. 16 and 23. *Justice and righteousness* express Isaiah's ideal for the people of God. **24:** *Mighty one of Israel* recalls Israel's patriarchal traditions (49.26; Gen.49.24; Ps.132.2,5). **25:** *As with lye*, or "thoroughly." **26:** Isaiah frequently uses symbolic names (7.14; 8.1; 9.6; see also

26 And I will restore your judges as at the first,
and your counselors as at the beginning.
Afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness,
the faithful city.”

27 Zion shall be redeemed by justice,
and those in her who repent, by righteousness.

28 But rebels and sinners shall be destroyed together,
and those who forsake the LORD shall be consumed.

29 For you shall be ashamed of the oaks in which you delighted;
and you shall blush for the gardens which you have chosen.

30 For you shall be like an oak whose leaf withers,
and like a garden without water.

31 And the strong shall become tow,
and his work a spark,
and both of them shall burn together,
with none to quench them.

2 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2 It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised above the hills;
and all the nations shall flow to it,
and many peoples shall come, and say:
“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob;

that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths.”
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 He shall judge between the nations,
and shall decide for many peoples;
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

5 O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD.

6 For thou hast rejected thy people,
the house of Jacob,
because they are full of diviners^a from the east
and of soothsayers like the Philistines,
and they strike hands with foreigners.

7 Their land is filled with silver and gold,
and there is no end to their treasures;
their land is filled with horses,
and there is no end to their chariots.

8 Their land is filled with idols;
they bow down to the work of their hands,
to what their own fingers have made.

9 So man is humbled,
and men are brought low —
forgive them not!

10 Enter into the rock,
and hide in the dust

^a Cn: Heb lacks of diviners

Jer.33.16; Ezek.48.35 n.). There will be a new creation; compare Am.9.11; Rev.3.12; 21.1–4. **29–31:** An allegory on Judah’s faithlessness based on one of Isaiah’s rare references to pagan religious practices; compare 57.5; Jer.2.27 Ezek.6.1–14.

2.1: Second superscription, perhaps for chs. 2–4. *Word* connotes “message” (Jer.7.1; 11.1). **2–5: The new age**, involving the elevation of Zion, the acknowledgment of the nations, and the age of peace. This oracle (vv. 2–4) is also found in Mic.4.1–4. **3: Law**, i.e. “teaching” (1.10), which is more suitable to the thought of the passage. **4:** The age of peace will follow the judgment of the LORD (compare 5.25; 30.27–28). **5:** Compare v. 3, paraphrased in Mic.4.5.

2.4–22: The day of the LORD. This is probably to be taken as three stanzas, vv. 6–11, 12–17, 18–22. The first two have a similar conclusion (compare vv. 11, 17), and it is suggested that the third ended similarly, for the present v. 22 is missing in the Septuagint and is grammatically corrupt. **6–11:** Judgment on idolatry. **6:** *Diviners* were forbidden in

- from before the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty.
- 11 The haughty looks of man shall be brought low,
and the pride of men shall be humbled;
and the LORD alone will be exalted
in that day.
- 12 For the LORD of hosts has a day
against all that is proud and lofty,
against all that is lifted up and high;^b
- 13 against all the cedars of Lebanon,
lofty and lifted up;
and against all the oaks of Bashan;
- 14 against all the high mountains,
and against all the lofty hills;
- 15 against every high tower,
and against every fortified wall;
- 16 against all the ships of Tarshish,
and against all the beautiful craft.
- 17 And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled,
and the pride of men shall be brought low;
and the LORD alone will be exalted in
that day.
- 18 And the idols shall utterly pass away.
- 19 And men shall enter the caves of the rocks
and the holes of the ground,
from before the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
- 20 In that day men will cast forth
their idols of silver and their idols of
gold,
which they made for themselves to
worship,
to the moles and the bats,
- 21 to enter the caverns of the rocks
and the clefts of the cliffs,
from before the terror of the LORD,
and from the glory of his majesty,
when he rises to terrify the earth.
- 22 Turn away from man
in whose nostrils is breath,
for of what account is he?
- 3 For, behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
is taking away from Jerusalem and from
Judah
stay and staff,
the whole stay of bread,
and the whole stay of water;
2 the mighty man and the soldier,
the judge and the prophet,
the diviner and the elder,
3 the captain of fifty
and the man of rank,
the counselor and the skilful magician
and the expert in charms.
4 And I will make boys their princes,
and babes shall rule over them.
5 And the people will oppress one another,
every man his fellow
and every man his neighbor;
the youth will be insolent to the elder,
and the base fellow to the honorable.
- 6 When a man takes hold of his brother
in the house of his father, saying:
“You have a mantle;
you shall be our leader,
and this heap of ruins
shall be under your rule”;
7 in that day he will speak out, saying:
- b* Cn Compare Gk: Heb *low*

Israel (Ex.22.18; Lev.20.27; Dt.18.10–11; compare 8.19; 1 Sam.28.8–25; Ezek.13.9). The situation fits Uzziah's reign 2.Kg.15.1–7; 2 Chr. ch. 26). 7: Judah's prosperity (Dt.17.16–17; 1 Kg.10.14–29). 11: *In that day*, the day of the LORD, in which God judges his enemies and manifests his glory is a recurring prophetic theme (13.6; Am.5.18–20; Jer.17.16–18; Ezek.30.3; J.1.15). 12–17: pride and punishment. 13: *Lebanon, Bashan*, Ezek.27.5–6; Jer.22.20. 16: *Ships of Tarshish*, the phrase may mean “refinery fleet” (see 1 Kg.10.22 n.; Jer.10.9 n.). 18–22: Judgment on idolatry. 19: The innumerable *caves* in Palestine's limestone hills are age-old places of refuge.

3.1–15: **Anarchy in Jerusalem.** 1–7: Without key men, society breaks down. 1: *Stay and staff*, everything which supports life, including food and drink (economic resources), and perhaps also the functionaries in vv. 2–3. 2–3: Offices deemed necessary for the continuity and stability of the state. 4: The inexperienced and naïve will rule. 5–6: Civil unrest will become open violence. 8–12: A commentary on vv. 1–7. Judah's brazen sinfulness and rejection of

- "I will not be a healer;
in my house there is neither bread nor
mantle;
you shall not make me
leader of the people."
- 8 For Jerusalem has stumbled,
and Judah has fallen;
because their speech and their deeds are
against the LORD,
defying his glorious presence.
- 9 Their partiality witnesses against them;
they proclaim their sin like Sodom,
they do not hide it.
Woe to them!
For they have brought evil upon
themselves.
- 10 Tell the righteous that it shall be well with
them,
for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.
- 11 Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him,
for what his hands have done shall be
done to him.
- 12 My people — children are their oppressors,
and women rule over them.
O my people, your leaders mislead you,
and confuse the course of your paths.
- 13 The LORD has taken his place to contend,
he stands to judge his people.^d
- 14 The LORD enters into judgment
with the elders and princes of his people:
"It is you who have devoured the vineyard,
the spoil of the poor is in your houses.
- 15 What do you mean by crushing my people,
by grinding the face of the poor?" says
the Lord GOD of hosts.
- 16 The LORD said:
Because the daughters of Zion are haughty
and walk with outstretched necks,
glancing wantonly with their eyes,
mincing along as they go,
tinkling with their feet;
- 17 the Lord will smite with a scab
the heads of the daughters of Zion,
and the LORD will lay bare their secret
parts.
- 18 In that day the Lord will take away the
finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the
crescents; ¹⁹ the pendants, the bracelets, and
the scarfs; ²⁰ the headdresses, the armlets, the
sashes, the perfume boxes, and the amulets;
²¹ the signet rings and nose rings; ²² the festal
robes, the mantles, the cloaks, and the hand-
bags; ²³ the garments of gauze, the linen gar-
ments, the turbans, and the veils.
- ²⁴ Instead of perfume there will be
rottenness;
and instead of a girdle, a rope;
and instead of well-set hair, baldness;
and instead of a rich robe, a girding of
sackcloth;
instead of beauty, shame.^e
- ²⁵ Your men shall fall by the sword
and your mighty men in battle.
- ²⁶ And her gates shall lament and mourn;
ravaged, she shall sit upon the ground.
- 4 And seven women shall take hold of one
man in that day, saying, "We will eat our
own bread and wear our own clothes, only let
us be called by your name; take away our
reproach."
- 2 In that day the branch of the LORD shall
be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the
land shall be the pride and glory of the sur-
vivors of Israel. ³ And he who is left in Zion
and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy,
every one who has been recorded for life in

^d Gk Syr: Heb *judge peoples*

^e One ancient Ms: Heb lacks *shame*

God's leadership has ruined the people. **13–15:** God will judge the corrupt judges. *Elders*, primary administrators of justice (Ex.19.7; Jos.20.4; Dt.21.19–21). *Princes*, royal appointees (1 Kg.4.2; 2 Kg.10.1; Jer.34.19). *Vineyard*, see 5.1–7.

3.16–4.1: The humiliation of Jerusalem's women (Am.4.1–3). **18–24:** Detailed expansion of v. 17. **3.25–4.1:** War's decimation of the male population forces the women to resort to desperate measures to preserve themselves and their self-respect. *Our reproach* summarizes 3.16–4.1.

4.2–6: Jerusalem's restoration. **2:** *Branch*, the righteous remnant (3.10; compare the Messiah to a Branch in 11.1; Jer.23.5); *fruit of the land*, a "return to paradise." **3:** *Recorded for life*, compare Ex.32.32; Mal.3.16; Dan.12.1;

Jerusalem,⁴ when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion and cleansed the bloodstains of Jerusalem from its midst by a spirit of judgment and by a spirit of burning.⁵ Then the LORD will create over the whole site of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, and smoke and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory there will be a canopy and a pavilion.⁶ It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.

5 Let me sing for my beloved
a love song concerning his vineyard:
My beloved had a vineyard
on a very fertile hill.

2 He dugged it and cleared it of stones,
and planted it with choice vines;
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,
and hewed out a wine vat in it;
and he looked for it to yield grapes,
but it yielded wild grapes.

3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem
and men of Judah,
judge, I pray you, between me
and my vineyard.

4 What more was there to do for my vineyard,
that I have not done in it?
When I looked for it to yield grapes,
why did it yield wild grapes?

5 And now I will tell you
what I will do to my vineyard.

I will remove its hedge,
and it shall be devoured;
I will break down its wall,
and it shall be trampled down.

6 I will make it a waste;
it shall not be pruned or hoed,
and briers and thorns shall grow up;
I will also command the clouds
that they rain no rain upon it.

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts
is the house of Israel,
and the men of Judah
are his pleasant planting;
and he looked for justice,
but behold, bloodshed;
for righteousness,
but behold, a cry!

8 Woe to those who join house to house,
who add field to field,
until there is no more room,
and you are made to dwell alone
in the midst of the land.

9 The LORD of hosts has sworn in my hearing:
"Surely many houses shall be desolate,
large and beautiful houses, without
inhabitant.

10 For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but
one bath,
and a homer of seed shall yield but an
ephah."

11 Woe to those who rise early in the
morning,

Rev.20.12,15. **5:** *Smoke and flaming fire*, the signs of God's presence among his people at the Exodus (Ex.13.21–22; 40.34–38).

5.1–7: Song of the vineyard (Hos.10.1; Jer.2.21; Ezek.19.10–14), an allegory. This unique didactic poem may have been composed for a celebration of the feast of tabernacles during Jotham's reign, the prophet imitating a vintage festival song. **1a:** Introduction to the poem. **2:** *Choice vines*, the Hebrew word ("soreq") means either red grapes, or grapes native to the valley of Sorek, west of Jerusalem. **3–4:** Judah's only possible answer would be judgment against the vineyard. Judah is asked to pass judgment on herself, much as Nathan through a parable had David pass judgment on himself (2 Sam.12.1–12). **7:** *Justice*, the faithful application of God's will to daily living. *Righteousness*, the living, dynamic relationship between man and God wherein man is spiritually and morally acceptable to God (1.27; 9.7; 16.5; 28.17). Righteousness and justice are naturally coupled (1.21) and grow out of the covenant relationship, the existence of which is assumed (Ex. chs. 19–20). *A cry*, from the oppressed.

5.8–23: Six reproaches (vv. 8,11,18,20,21,22; perhaps 10.1–4 is a seventh). Compare Am.5.7,18; 6.1; Jer.22.13. **8–10:** Against covetousness (Mic.2.1–5,8–9; Ex.20.17). *Bath*, ephah, 6.07 gallons; *homer*, 6.5 bushels (see Ezek. 45.11 n.). **11–12:** Against carousing (Am.6.4–6). **13–17: Knowledge**, 1.3. The severity of Judah's punishment will

- that they may run after strong drink,
 who tarry late into the evening
 till wine inflames them!
- 12 They have lyre and harp,
 timbrel and flute and wine at their
 feasts;
 but they do not regard the deeds of the
 LORD,
 or see the work of his hands.
- 13 Therefore my people go into exile
 for want of knowledge;
 their honored men are dying of hunger,
 and their multitude is parched with
 thirst.
- 14 Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite
 and opened its mouth beyond measure,
 and the nobility of Jerusalem^f and her mul-
 titude go down,
 her throng and he who exults in her.
- 15 Man is bowed down, and men are brought
 low,
 and the eyes of the haughty are
 humbled.
- 16 But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice,
 and the Holy God shows himself holy in
 righteousness.
- 17 Then shall the lambs graze as in their pas-
 ture,
 fatlings and kids^g shall feed among the
 ruins.
- 18 Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords
 of falsehood,
 who draw sin as with cart ropes,
 19 who say: "Let him make haste,
 let him speed his work
 that we may see it;
 let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel
 draw near,
 and let it come, that we may know it!"
- 20 Woe to those who call evil good and good
 evil,
- who put darkness for light and light for
 darkness,
 who put bitter for sweet and sweet for
 bitter!
- 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,
 and shrewd in their own sight!
- 22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking
 wine,
 and valiant men in mixing strong drink,
 23 who acquit the guilty for a bribe,
 and deprive the innocent of his right!
- 24 Therefore, as the tongue of fire devours the
 stubble,
 and as dry grass sinks down in the
 flame,
 so their root will be as rottenness,
 and their blossom go up like dust;
 for they have rejected the law of the LORD
 of hosts,
 and have despised the word of the Holy
 One of Israel.
- 25 Therefore the anger of the LORD was
 kindled against his people,
 and he stretched out his hand against
 them and smote them,
 and the mountains quaked;
 and their corpses were as refuse
 in the midst of the streets.
 For all this his anger is not turned away
 and his hand is stretched out still.
- 26 He will raise a signal for a nation afar off,
 and whistle for it from the ends of the
 earth;
 and lo, swiftly, speedily it comes!
- 27 None is weary, none stumbles,
 none slumbers or sleeps,
 not a waistcloth is loose,
 not a sandal-thong broken;
 28 their arrows are sharp,
 all their bows bent,
- ^f Heb *her nobility* ^g Cn Compare Gk: Heb *aliens*

require the enlargement of *Sheol* (the underworld, 14.9–18). **16:** In all he does, God is just and right. **18–19:** Against mocking God. **20:** Against moral depravity (32.5; Pr.17.15). **21:** Against conceit. **22–23:** Against bravado and bribery. **24b–30:** These verses should probably follow 10.4 (see 9.8–10.4 n.). *Law*, here also in the sense of “teaching” (see 1.10 n.). The Assyrians (*a nation afar off*; Jer.5.15, referring to Babylon) will be the executors of God’s judgment.

their horses' hoofs seem like flint,
 and their wheels like the whirlwind.
 29 Their roaring is like a lion,
 like young lions they roar;
 they growl and seize their prey,
 they carry it off, and none can rescue.
 30 They will growl over it on that day,
 like the roaring of the sea.
 And if one look to the land,
 behold, darkness and distress;
 and the light is darkened by its clouds.

6 In the year that King Uzzi'ah died I saw
 the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and
 lifted up; and his train filled the temple.
 2 Above him stood the seraphim; each had six
 wings: with two he covered his face, and with
 two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.
 3 And one called to another and said:
 "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
 the whole earth is full of his glory."
 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook
 at the voice of him who called, and the house
 was filled with smoke. 5 And I said: "Woe is
 me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean
 lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of
 unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King,
 the LORD of hosts!"

6 Then flew one of the seraphim to me, hav-
 ing in his hand a burning coal which he had
 taken with tongs from the altar. 7 And he
 touched my mouth, and said: "Behold, this
 has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away,
 and your sin forgiven." 8 And I heard the voice
 of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and
 who will go for us?" then I said, "Here am I!
 Send me." 9 And he said, "Go, and say to this
 people:

'Hear and hear, but do not understand;
 see and see, but do not perceive.'
 10 Make the heart of this people fat,
 and their ears heavy,
 and shut their eyes;
 lest they see with their eyes,
 and hear with their ears,
 and understand with their hearts,
 and turn and be healed."
 11 Then I said, "How long, O Lord?"
 And he said:
 "Until cities lie waste
 without inhabitant,
 and houses without men,
 and the land is utterly desolate,
 12 and the LORD removes men far away,
 and the forsaken places are many in the
 midst of the land.
 13 And though a tenth remain in it,
 it will be burned again,
 like a terebinth or an oak,
 whose stump remains standing
 when it is felled."
 The holy seed is its stump.

7 In the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, son
 of Uzzi'ah, king of Judah, Rezin the king
 of Syria and Pekah the son of Remali'ah the
 king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to wage
 war against it, but they could not conquer it.
 2 When the house of David was told, "Syria is
 in league with E'phraim," his heart and the
 heart of his people shook as the trees of the
 forest shake before the wind.

3 And the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go forth
 to meet Ahaz, you and She'ar-jash'ub^h your
 son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool

^h That is *A remnant shall return*

6.1–13: The call of Isaiah. God's appearance is described in the setting of the Jerusalem temple (compare the description of the enthroned deity in 1 Kg.22.19–23; Ezek.1.4–2.1). **1:** *Year*, 742 B.C. *Throne*, ark of the covenant. **2:** *Seraphim*, possibly griffin-like creatures; compare the cherubim, also associated with the glory of the Lord (Ezek. ch. 1). **3:** *Thrice-holy* for emphasis (Jer.7.4). **5:** Before the holy God, sinful man cannot stand (Ex.33.18–20). **6–8:** Cleansed by God's forgiving act, Isaiah may now speak for God. **9–12:** Compare Jer.1.10,13–19. Verses 9b–10 are quoted in Mt.13.10–15; compare Mk.4.12; Lk.8.10; Jn.12.39–41; Acts 28.26–27. **13:** The last part of the verse is obscure and textually corrupt and perhaps should be restored to read, "... like the terebinth [of the goddess] and the oak of Asherah, cast out with the pillar of the high places," that is, like the destroyed furnishings of a pagan high place.

7.1–8.15: Isaiah and the Syro-Ephraimite War (734–733 B.C.). For the historical background see 2 Kg.16.1–20. **1–9: Sign of Shear-jashub.** 2: The continuation of the Davidic monarchy was threatened (see v. 6). **3:** *Shear-jashub*, "A remnant shall return"; assuming the worst eventuality, God's promise to David (2 Sam.7.8–16) will be preserved in

on the highway to the Fuller's Field,⁴ and say to him, 'Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remali'ah.⁵ Because Syria, with E'phraim and the son of Remali'ah, has devised evil against you, saying,⁶ "Let us go up against Judah and terrify it; and let us conquer it for ourselves, and set up the son of Ta'be-el as king in the midst of it,"⁷ thus says the Lord GOD:

It shall not stand,

and it shall not come to pass.

⁸ For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin.

(Within sixty-five years E'phraim will be broken to pieces so that it will no longer be a people.)

⁹ And the head of E'phraim is Sama'ria, and the head of Sama'ria is the son of Remali'ah.

If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established.'

10 Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz,¹¹ "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven."¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test."¹³ And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also?¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young womanⁱ shall conceive and bear^j a son, and shall call his name Imman'u-el.^k ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted. ¹⁷ The LORD will bring upon you and upon

your people and upon your father's house such days as have not come since the day that E'phraim departed from Judah — the king of Assyria."

18 In that day the LORD will whistle for the fly which is at the sources of the streams of Egypt, and for the bee which is in the land of Assyria. ¹⁹ And they will all come and settle in the steep ravines, and in the clefts of the rocks, and on all the thornbushes, and on all the pastures.

20 In that day the Lord will shave with a razor which is hired beyond the River — with the king of Assyria — the head and the hair of the feet, and it will sweep away the beard also.

21 In that day a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep;²² and because of the abundance of milk which they give, he will eat curds; for every one that is left in the land will eat curds and honey.

23 In that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth a thousand shekels of silver, will become briers and thorns. ²⁴ With bow and arrows men will come there, for all the land will be briers and thorns;²⁵ and as for all the hills which used to be hoed with a hoe, you will not come there for fear of briers and thorns; but they will become a place where cattle are let loose and where sheep tread.

8 Then the LORD said to me, "Take a large tablet and write upon it in common characters, 'Belonging to Ma'her-shal'al-hash-baz.'"¹

² And I got reliable witnesses, Uri'ah the priest and Zechari'ah the son of Jeberechi'ah, to attest for me. ³ And I went to the prophet-

i Or virgin *j* Or is with child and shall bear *k* That is God is with us

the remnant (10.20–23). *Upper pool*, reservoir south of the Pool of Siloam. **5:** *Son of Tabeel*, perhaps a prince of Judah whose mother came from Tabeel, a region of northern Transjordan. **8–9a:** The text and meaning are unclear.

7.10–17: Sign of Immanuel. **13:** This expresses Isaiah's impatience. **14:** The sign is *Immanuel*, "God with us"; a second (compare vv. 3–9) assurance to the frightened, wavering Ahaz. *Young woman*, Hebrew '*almah*, feminine of '*elem*, young man (1 Sam.17.56; 20.22); the word appears in Gen.24.43; Ex.2.8; Ps.68.25, and elsewhere, where it is translated "young woman," "girl," "maiden." **15:** *Curds, honey*, simple foods suggesting difficult times; *good and evil*, age of moral discrimination. **18–25:** Four threats amplifying v. 17. **20:** Feet, see Ex.4.25 n.

8.1–4: The sign of Maher-shalal-hash-baz, "The spoil speeds, the prey hastes"; Isaiah's third assurance to Ahaz. **1:** *Tablet*, of wood. **2:** *Uriah*, 2 Kg.16.10–16. *Zechariah*, perhaps Ahaz's father-in-law (2 Kg.18.2). **3:** *Prophetess*, Isa-

ess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Ma'her-shal'al-hash-baz; ⁴ for before the child knows how to cry 'My father' or 'My mother,' the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria."

5 The LORD spoke to me again: ⁶ "Because this people have refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently, and melt in fear before^m Rezin and the son of Remali'ah; ⁷ therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory; and it will rise over all his channels and go over all its banks; ⁸ and it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the neck; and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Imman'u-el."

⁹ Be broken, you peoples, and be dismayed; give ear, all you far countries; gird yourselves and be dismayed; gird yourselves and be dismayed.

¹⁰ Take counsel together, but it will come to nought; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.^x

11 For the LORD spoke thus to me with his strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying: ¹² "Do not call conspiracy all that this people call conspiracy, and do not fear what they fear, nor be in dread. ¹³ But the LORD of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. ¹⁴ And he will become a sanctuary, and a stone of offense, and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap

and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁵ And many shall stumble thereon; they shall fall and be broken; they shall be snared and taken."

16 Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples. ¹⁷ I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him. ¹⁸ Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are signs and portents in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion. ¹⁹ And when they say to you, "Consult the mediums and the wizards who chirp and mutter," should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ To the teaching and to the testimony! Surely for this word which they speak there is no dawn. ²¹ They will pass through the land,ⁿ greatly distressed and hungry; and when they are hungry, they will be enraged and will curse^o their king and their God, and turn their faces upward; ²² and they will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be thrust into thick darkness.

⁹^p But there will be no gloom for her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naph'tali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. ^{2q} The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

l That is *The spoil speeds, the prey hastes*
m Cn; Heb *rejoices in* *x* Heb *immanu el*
n Heb *it* *o* Or *curse by* *p* Ch 8.23 in Heb

iah's wife. **5–8:** Oracle of Shiloah and the Euphrates; Judah also is included in Assyria's sweep. *Shiloah*, a conduit flanking Ophel from the spring Gihon (see 1 Kg.1.33 n.) to the reservoir (7.3), is contrasted with the *River*, the great Euphrates. Ahaz's mighty ally, Assyria, will inundate tiny Judah, God's people. **9–10:** God is with his people (see 7.14 n.) to deliver them (Ps. 46, esp. vv. 7,11).

8.11–22: The testimony and the teaching. 11–15: "Man proposes — God disposes" (Pr.16.9). **16:** *Bind, seal*, as one binds and seals a scroll (Jer.32.10). **18:** *Signs*, 7.3; 7.14; 8.1. **19–20:** Condemnation of superstition (2.6). for necromancy (consultation of the dead), see 1 Sam.28.7 n. **9.1:** Transitional verse from doom to promise. *Zebulun*, *Naphtali*, and Issachar constituted later *Galilee*. *Way of the sea*, the highway from Damascus to the sea, probable route of the Assyrian invasion in 733–732 B.C. (2 Kg.15.29).

9.2–7: The messianic king (compare 11.1–9). Filled with borrowed phrases referring to the Davidic monarchy, this passage may have originally celebrated the accession of a Judean king, perhaps Hezekiah; in its present context it

- those who dwelt in a land of deep
darkness,
on them has light shined.
- 3 Thou hast multiplied the nation,
thou hast increased its joy;
they rejoice before thee
as with joy at the harvest,
as men rejoice when they divide the
spoil.
- 4 For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
thou hast broken as on the day of
Mid'ian.
- 5 For every boot of the tramping warrior in
battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 6 For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government will be upon his
shoulder,
and his name will be called
"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
- 7 Of the increase of his government and of
peace
there will be no end,
upon the throne of David, and over his
kingdom,
to establish it, and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.
- 8 The Lord has sent a word against Jacob,
and it will light upon Israel;
- 9 and all the people will know,
E'phraim and the inhabitants of
Sama'ria,

- who say in pride and in arrogance of
heart:
- 10 "The bricks have fallen,
but we will build with dressed stones;
the sycamores have been cut down,
but we will put cedars in their place."
- 11 So the LORD raises adversaries' against
them,
and stirs up their enemies.
- 12 The Syrians on the east and the Philistines
on the west
devour Israel with open mouth.
For all this his anger is not turned away
and his hand is stretched out still.
- 13 The people did not turn to him who smote
them,
nor seek the LORD of hosts.
- 14 So the LORD cut off from Israel head and
tail,
palm branch and reed in one day —
- 15 the elder and honored man is the head,
and the prophet who teaches lies is the
tail;
- 16 for those who lead this people lead them
astray,
and those who are led by them are
swallowed up.
- 17 Therefore the Lord does not rejoice over
their young men,
and has no compassion on their
fatherless and widows;
for every one is godless and an evildoer,
and every mouth speaks folly.
For all this his anger is not turned away
and his hand is stretched out still.
- 18 For wickedness burns like a fire,
it consumes briars and thorns;
it kindles the thickets of the forest,
- q Ch 9.1 in Heb r Cn: Heb the adversaries of Rezin

describes the coming Messiah as the ideal king. **4:** *Midian*, Jg.7.15–25. **6:** *Government*, symbol of authority. *Mighty God*, divine in might. *Everlasting Father*, continuing fatherly love and care. *Prince of Peace*, the king who brings peace and prosperity. The king represents the best qualities of Israel's heroes (Ezek.37.25).

9.8–10.4: *Ephraim's judgment an object lesson for Judah* (five stanzas, including 5.24b–30; with the same refrain, 9.12,17,21; 10.4; 5.25; compare Jer.3.6–10; Ezek.16.44–58). **8–12:** Punishment for pride and unrepented wickedness. **8:** *Word*, more than a statement; it includes the potential and fact of accomplishment (55.10–11; Jer.23.18–20). **10:** *Bricks*, *sycamore*, for ordinary houses; *dressed stone*, *cedar* for palaces (Jer.22.7,23). **13–17:** Corrupt leaders misled their people (Jer.6.14). **18–21:** Moral decay consumes like a forest fire (Hos.7.6); civil war breaks

and they roll upward in a column of smoke.

¹⁹ Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts the land is burned, and the people are like fuel for the fire; no man spares his brother.

²⁰ They snatch on the right, but are still hungry, and they devour on the left, but are not satisfied;

each devours his neighbor's^s flesh,

²¹ Manas's^heh E'phraim, and E'phraim Manas's^heh,

and together they are against Judah.

For all this his anger is not turned away and his hand is stretched out still.

10 Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression,

² to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be their spoil, and that they may make the fatherless their prey!

³ What will you do on the day of punishment, in the storm which will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth?

⁴ Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain.

For all this his anger is not turned away and his hand is stretched out still.

⁵ Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger, the staff of my fury!^t

⁶ Against a godless nation I send him,

and against the people of my wrath I command him,

to take spoil and seize plunder, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.

⁷ But he does not so intend, and his mind does not so think; but it is in his mind to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few;

⁸ for he says: "Are not my commanders all kings?

⁹ Is not Calno like Car'chemish?

Is not Hamath like Arpad?

Is not Sama'ria like Damascus?

¹⁰ As my hand has reached to the kingdoms of the idols

whose graven images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Sama'ria,

¹¹ shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols as I have done to Sama'ria and her images?"

¹² When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem he^u will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride. ¹² For he says:

"By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding;

I have removed the boundaries of peoples, and have plundered their treasures; like a bull I have brought down those who sat on thrones.

¹⁴ My hand has found like a nest the wealth of the peoples; and as men gather eggs that have been forsaken so I have gathered all the earth;

^s Tg Compare Gk: Heb *the flesh of his arm*

^t Heb *a staff it is in their hand my fury* ^u Heb *I*

out (2 Kg.15.23–31; 16.5). **20:** *His neighbor's flesh*; the Hebrew consonantal text may be read "the flesh of his offspring" (on cannibalism, see Jer.19.9). Some treat this passage as a proverb. **10.1–4:** Justice is miscarried (3.13–15; Jer.8.8).

10.5–19: Woe, O Assyria! Unaware that he was serving as God's instrument, powerful Assyria was doomed by his pride to destruction (Jer.25.8–14; 50.23). **9:** In northern Syria, Tiglath-Pileser III captured *Calno* (742 B.C.), *Carchemish*, *Hamath* (738), *Arpad* (741), southern Syria, *Damascus* (732). Menahem of Israel paid him tribute (2 Kg.15.19–20). **10–11:** To Assyria, the LORD was another idol. **12:** Prose summation of vv. 5–11,13–19. **13–14:** Assyria's boast.

and there was none that moved a wing,
or opened the mouth, or chirped.”

- 15 Shall the axe vaunt itself over him who
hews with it,
or the saw magnify itself against him
who wields it?
As if a rod should wield him who lifts it,
or as if a staff should lift him is not
wood!

- 16 Therefore the Lord, the LORD of hosts,
will send wasting sickness among his
stout warriors,
and under his glory a burning will be
kindled,
like the burning of fire.

- 17 The light of Israel will become a fire,
and his Holy One a flame;
and it will burn and devour
his thorns and briars in one day.

- 18 The glory of his forest and of his fruitful
land
the LORD will destroy, both soul and
body,
and it will be as when a sick man wastes
away.

- 19 The remnant of the trees of his forest will
be so few
that a child can write them down.

20 In that day the remnant of Israel and the
survivors of the house of Jacob will no more
lean upon him that smote them, but will lean
upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in
truth. ²¹ A remnant will return, the remnant of
Jacob, to the mighty God. ²² For though your

people Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a
remnant of them will return. Destruction is
decreed, overflowing with righteousness.

²³ For the Lord, the LORD of hosts, will make
a full end, as decreed, in the midst of all the
earth.

24 Therefore thus says the Lord, the LORD
of hosts: “O my people, who dwell in Zion, be
not afraid of the Assyrians when they smite
with the rod and lift up their staff against you
as the Egyptians did. ²⁵ For in a very little
while my indignation will come to an end, and
my anger will be directed to their destruction.
²⁶ And the LORD of hosts will wield against
them a scourge, as when he smote Mid’ian at
the rock of Oreb; and his rod will be over the
sea, and he will lift it as he did in Egypt.
²⁷ And in that day his burden will depart from
your shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed
from your neck.”

He has gone up from Rommon,^v
²⁸ has come to Ai’ath;
he has passed through Migron,
at Michmash he stores his baggage;
²⁹ they have crossed over the pass,
at Geba they lodge for the night;
Ramah trembles,
Gib’e-ah of Saul has fled.
³⁰ Cry aloud, O daughter of Gallim!
Hearken, O La’ishah!
Answer her, O An’athoth!

^v Cn: Heb and his yoke from your neck, and a yoke will
be destroyed because of fatness

Removed boundaries, to discourage rebellion, Assyria transplanted subject peoples. **15:** Rhetorical question recalling v. 5 (45.9). **16–19:** Light of Israel, God’s majestic glory (2.10; 29.6; Ezek.1.26–28). God will ravage Assyria like a forest fire.

10.20–23: Only a remnant will return. **21:** *A remnant will return*, in Hebrew this is the same as the name of Isaiah’s son Shear-jashub; in 7.3–4 it stands in an oracle of encouragement, but here in an oracle of doom. **22:** *Sand of the sea* recalls God’s oath to the patriarchs (Gen.22.17; compare Rom.9.27). In Isaiah (4.2–3; 6.13; 7.3; 28.5–6; 37.4; 37.31–32; compare Mic.4.7; 5.2–9; Zeph.2.7) *remnant* refers to those remaining after Judah’s punishment, from whom a great people will arise. During the Exile the remnant was the deported people (Ezek.6.8–10; Jer.23.3; 31.7), whom God would bring back and make great. After the Exile Jewish faithlessness evoked again the pre-exilic concept (Zech.8.11; Hag.1.12; Zech.14.2).

10.24–27c: Oracle of promise. *Oreb*, Jg.7.25; *rod*, Ex.14.16.

10.27d–32: The approach of the Assyrians. The invader (Tiglath-Pileser III or Sennacherib, 1.4–9 n.) approached from the north toward the outskirts of Jerusalem (Jer.6.1–3). This may be a “traditional” description of the northern invasion route; for a southern route, see Mic.1.10–15. **33–34:** The LORD, the forester, will cut down Assyria.

- ³¹ Madme'nah is in flight,
the inhabitants of Gebim flee for safety.
³² This very day he will halt at Nob,
he will shake his fist
at the mount of the daughter of Zion,
the hill of Jerusalem.

- ³³ Behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts
will lop the boughs with terrifying
power;
the great in height will be hewn down,
and the lofty will be brought low.
³⁴ He will cut down the thickets of the forest
with an axe,
and Lebanon with its majestic trees^w
will fall.

11 There shall come forth a shoot from
the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

- ² And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon
him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of
the LORD.

- ³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the
LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;

- ⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the
poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of
the earth;
and he shall smite the earth with the rod of
his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall
slay the wicked.

- ⁵ Righteousness shall be the girdle of his
waist,
and faithfulness the girdle of his loins.

- ⁶ The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
and the leopard shall lie down with the
kid,
and the calf and the lion and the fatling
together,
and a little child shall lead them.

- ⁷ The cow and the bear shall feed;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

- ⁸ The sucking child shall play over the hole
of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put his hand
on the adder's den.

- ⁹ They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain;
for the earth shall be full of the knowledge
of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as
an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations
seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious.

¹¹ In that day the Lord will extend his
hand yet a second time to recover the remnant
which is left of his people, from Assyria, from
Egypt, from Pathros, from Ethiopia, from
Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from
the coastlands of the sea.

- ¹² He will raise an ensign for the nations,
and will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.

- ¹³ The jealousy of E'phraim shall depart,
and those who harass Judah shall be cut
off;

^w Cn Compare Gk Vg: Heb *with a majestic one*

11.1–9: The messianic king (compare 9.2–7). For the occasion of the original oracle, see 9.2–7 n. **1–3a:** The Messiah will manifest the characteristics of Israel's great men. **1:** *Jesse*, David's father (1 Sam.16.1–20). **2:** To these six "Gifts of the Spirit" the Septuagint adds "piety." **3b–5:** Wisdom and justice (5.7) were traditionally associated in the ideal king (1 Kg. ch. 3; Ps. 72). **6–8:** His reign will be "paradise regained"; the disorder of nature will be restored to its pristine harmony (Ezek.47.1–12). **9:** *My holy mountain*, 65.25; Ezek.20.40.

11.10–16: The messianic age. **10:** *Root* is a person, not the dynasty (v. 1). **11–16:** Restored and reunited Israel takes vengeance against her oppressors. The terminology and mood of vv. 11–16 indicate a post-exilic date. **11:** *Pathros*, Upper Egypt; *Shinar*, Babylonia; *coastlands*, Aegean seacoast and islands. **12:** *Ensign*, here a standard, not a person (v. 10). **15:** *The tongue of the sea*, the Red Sea (Ex. ch. 14), *River*, Euphrates.

E'phraim shall not be jealous of Judah,
and Judah shall not harass E'phraim.

- ¹⁴ But they shall swoop down upon the
shoulder of the Philistines in the west,
and together they shall plunder the
people of the east.

They shall put forth their hand against
Edom and Moab,
and the Ammonites shall obey them.

- ¹⁵ And the LORD will utterly destroy
the tongue of the sea of Egypt;
and will wave his hand over the River
with his scorching wind,
and smite it into seven channels
that men may cross dryshod.

- ¹⁶ And there will be a highway from Assyria
for the remnant which is left of his people,
as there was for Israel
when they came up from the land of
Egypt.

12 You will say in that day: "I will give
thanks to thee, O LORD,
for though thou wast angry with me,

thy anger turned away,
and thou didst comfort me.

- ² "Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my
song,
and he has become my salvation."

³ With joy you will draw water from the
wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that
day:

"Give thanks to the LORD,
call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the nations,
proclaim that his name is exalted.

- ⁵ "Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done
gloriously;
let this be known^x in all the earth.

- ⁶ Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of
Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One
of Israel."

^x Or *this is made known*

12.1–6: Two songs conclude Section I of the book of Isaiah. (a) **1–3:** Song of deliverance (compare Ps. 116). **1a** and **4a** are liturgical rubrics. **2b:** Ex. 15.2; Ps. 118.14. (b) **4–6:** Song of thanksgiving. *Shout and sing for joy*, compare Zeph. 3.14. *In your midst*, God in his temple. *Holy One*, see 1.4.

Reading 8

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction by Constance Bouchard

Because Christianity began as a sect of Judaism, the original Christian Bible was exactly the same as the Jewish Bible. However, both oral and written accounts of the life and death of Jesus soon began taking on a significance for believers equal to the teachings of the Bible they already had. Although it took close to two centuries to decide which accounts belonged in the “new” Bible, and although some people argued, unsuccessfully, that Christians needed to reject the Jewish Bible, eventually a general agreement was reached on what belonged in the “New” Testament, to put alongside the “Old” Testament they already had. The New Testament was written in Greek, the language of all educated people in the eastern parts of the Roman Empire, which in the first few centuries A.D. included the entire Mediterranean region.

The New Testament, as it was put together by the second century A.D., begins with four different accounts of Jesus and his teachings. They are generally credited with having been written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, all names of apostles of Jesus; in fact, it is not known who actually wrote them, but the names are convenient labels. The four accounts, or “gospels,” take quite different positions on the significance of the life of Jesus; a Jewish teacher who was put to death by the Romans, on grounds of sedition, around 30 A.D. All four gospels were written within a generation or so after 70 A.D., when the Romans cracked down on Jewish rebellion against Roman domination and destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem. The Gospel of Mark is the earliest, and that of John the last, to be written. All four gospels were written by men who thought that they, and they alone, understood the true significance of Jesus. But in the second century A.D., rather than argue about which version was the best, the Christian community decided to accept all four, putting them back to back. From then on, Christians put parts of all four gospels together for a coherent story of Jesus, ignoring or reconciling the gospels’ differences.

The gospels are not, however, the oldest part of the New Testament. The oldest part is the letters of Paul. Paul was a highly-educated Jew who was also a Roman citizen (as not many Jews were in the first century A.D.). Although he never met Jesus personally, he became an early leader of the new Christian sect. He helped spread Christianity through the Roman Empire, wandering from one Christian community to another. His letters were sent to friends in these communities when he was elsewhere. His significance, however, lies in his theology. Paul was the first to apply Hellenistic philosophy, in which he was highly learned, to Christian doctrine.

Hence, from the beginning, Christianity was influenced by a combination of Jewish thought, Greek philosophy, and Roman culture, as well as the specific teachings of Jesus.

The following selections begin with the Gospel of Matthew, which was an account of the life of Jesus composed specifically for a Jewish audience. One of the earliest questions within the Christian community was whether it would continue, as it had begun, as a form of Judaism, or whether non-Jews could be admitted. This gospel was written to argue that Christianity was the culmination of Jewish prophecy. Thus it begins by invoking Abraham, the original Jewish patriarch, and by demonstrating that Jesus was descended from Abraham via King David. In this gospel the Roman governors, like Pilate, or the kings like Herod who ruled as puppets of the Romans, are the chief enemies of the Jews, but the Jewish priests are also portrayed as bitterly opposed to Jesus. Here the author is suggesting that Jews ought to realize that Christianity was the culmination of Judaism, but that many Jewish leaders wrongly refused to recognize this.

The Gospel of John begins quite differently, not with Jewish antecedents, but with a statement on the nature of the Word that incorporates Hellenistic philosophy with Christianity. Although the author indicated that Jesus had fulfilled Jewish prophecy (especially that of Isaiah), he was at pains to distinguish Judaism and Christianity. This gospel author wrote about two generations after Paul wrote his Letter to the Romans, which set out very clearly the philosophical underpinnings which he saw in Christianity, and also distinguished Jewish and Christian beliefs. Paul's discussion of sin and salvation in this letter became the basis of all later Christian theology.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

The Gospel according to Matthew is a manual of Christian teaching in which Jesus Christ, Lord of the new-yet-old community, the church, is described particularly as the fulfiller and fulfilment of God's will disclosed in the Old Testament. Jesus is set forth as Israel's Messiah in whom God's purpose culminates and by whose words and life his followers, the true Israel, may gain divine forgiveness and fellowship.

The accounts of Jesus' deeds and words, drawn from Christian sources both oral and written, are arranged in a generally biographical order: chs. 1–2, Birth of Jesus; 3.1–12, Activity of John the Baptist; 3.13–4.11, Baptism and temptation of Jesus; 4.12–18.35, Jesus' preaching and teaching in Galilee; chs. 19–20, Journey to Jerusalem; chs. 21–27, The last week, concluding with Jesus' crucifixion and burial; ch. 28, The resurrection; Jesus' commission to his disciples.

Within this natural framework the accounts of what Jesus said or did are grouped by common subject matter. The five discourses of Jesus, a noteworthy feature of this Gospel (see 7.28 n.), are collections of teachings on specific themes: chs. 5–7, The Sermon on the Mount; ch. 10, Instructions for missionary disciples; ch. 13, The parables of the kingdom of God; ch. 18, On sincere discipleship; chs. 24–25; On the end of this age.

This Gospel is anonymous. The unknown Christian teacher who prepared it during the last third of the first century may have used as one of his sources a collection of Jesus' sayings that the apostle Matthew is said to have made. In time a title containing Matthew's name, and signifying apostolic authority, came to identify the whole.

THE BOOK OF THE GENEALOGY OF Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,³ and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram,^{a 4} and Ram^a the father of Ammin'adab, and Ammin'adab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon,⁵ and Salmon the father of Bo'az by Rahab, and Bo'az the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse,⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uri'ah,⁷ and Solomon the father of Rehobo'am, and Rehobo'am the father of Abi'jah, and Abi'jah the father of Asa,^{b 8} and Asa^b the father of Jehosh'aphat, and Jehosh'aphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzzi'ah,⁹ and Uzzi'ah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezeki'ah,¹⁰ and Hezeki'ah the father of Manas'seh, and Manas'seh the father of Amos,^c and Amos^c the father of Josi'ah,¹¹ and Josi'ah the father of Jechoni'ah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

12 And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoni'ah was the father of She-al'ti-el,^d and She-al'ti-el^d the father of Zerub'babel,¹³ and Zerub'babel the father of Abi'ud, and Abi'ud the father of Eli'akim, and Eli'akim the father of Azor,¹⁴ and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eli'ud,¹⁵ and Eli'ud the father of

Elea'zar, and Elea'zar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob,¹⁰ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ^f took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit;¹⁹ and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.²⁰ But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit;²¹ she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."²² All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and his name shall be called Emman'u-el" (which means, God with us).²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife,²⁵ but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

a Greek *Aram* *b* Greek *Asaph* *c* Other authorities read *Amon* *d* Greek *Salathiel* *f* Other ancient authorities read *of the Christ*

1.1–17: Jesus' royal descent (Lk.3.23–38) is traced through *David the king* (22.41–45; Rom. 1.3) back to Abraham the patriarch (Gal.3.16). **3–6:** Ru.4.18–22; 1 Chr.2.1–15. **11: The deportation**, 2 Kg.24.8–16; Jer.27.20. **12: Jeconiaiah**, or Jehoiachin (2 Kg.24.6; 1 Chr.3.16). *Shealtiel* apparently transmitted the line of legal descent from *Jeconiaiah* to *Zerubbabel* (Ezra 3.2; Hag.2.2; Lk.3.27), although the Chronicler traces it through *Pedaiah* (1 Chr.3.16–19). **13–16:** The persons from *Abiud* to *Jacob* are otherwise unknown. **16: Christ**, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah," which means "anointed one" (compare Lev.4.3,5,16; 2 Sam.1.14,16).

1.18–2.23: Jesus' birth and infancy (Lk.1.26–2.40). **20: Angel**, see Heb.1.14 n. **21:** The Hebrew and Aramaic forms of *Jesus* and *he will save* are similar. The point could be suggested by translating, "You shall call his name 'Savior' because he will save." **22–23:** See Is.7.14 n. **25: Until:** According to Catholic teaching, the Semitic idiom in the use of *until* here does not imply that they had conjugal relations after the birth of Jesus.

2 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying ² "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will govern my people Israel.'

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; ⁸ and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹ When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; ¹¹ and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

¹³ Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." ¹⁴ And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸ "A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled,
because they were no more."

¹⁹ But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ²⁰ "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." ²¹ And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. ²³ And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

2.1–12: The wise men (Magi). **1:** Herod the Great died early in 4 B.C. The *wise men*, a learned class in ancient Persia. **2:** Jer.23.5; Num.24.17. **5:** Jn.7.42. **6:** Mic.5.2. **11:** See Lk.2.7 n.

2.13–23: Escape to Egypt and return. **15:** *Out of Egypt*. . . , a quotation from Hos.11.1, where the reference is to Israel (compare Ex.4.22). **18:** Quoted from Jer.31.15. *Rachel*, wife of Jacob, died in childbirth and according to Gen.35.16–20 was buried near Bethlehem. *Ramah*, north of Jerusalem, was the scene of national grief (Jer.40.1) inflicted by an enemy. **22:** *Archelaus* reigned from 4 B.C. to A.D. 6 and was replaced by a Roman procurator. **23:** There is a similarity in sound and possibly in meaning between the Aramaic word for *Nazareth* and the Hebrew word translated *branch* (Is.11.1).

3 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

⁴ Now John wore a garment of camel’s hair, and a leather girdle around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Bear fruit that befits repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his

hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened^g and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; ¹⁷ and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son,^h with whom I am well pleased.”

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written,

‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”

g Other ancient authorities add to him *h* Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved

3.1–12: Activity of John the Baptist (Mk.1.1–8; Lk.3.1–18; Jn.1.6–8,19–28). **1:** *John* resembled the Old Testament prophets (compare v. 4 with 2 Kg.1.8; Zech.13.4). Christian faith understood him to fulfil Is.40.3; Mal.3.1; 4.5 (see 3.3; 17.10–12). His influence outside Christianity is attested by Acts 18.25; 19.1–7. *Those days*, namely, when Jesus began his public life. *The wilderness of Judea* lay east and southeast of Jerusalem. **2:** *Repent*, literally “return,” meant to come back to the way of life charted by the covenant between God and Israel (Ex.19.3–6; 24.3–8; Jer.31.31–34). *The kingdom*, see 4.17 n. **3:** Is.40.3 **6:** See Mk.1.4 n. **7:** *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* formed two major divisions among the Jews (for differences between them, see 22.23 n. and Acts 23.6–10). A third Jewish sect in Palestine was the Essenes (see Josephus, *B. J.*, II, viii, 2–13); their beliefs and practices are reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls found at Qumran (see “Survey of . . . Bible Lands,” §15, end). *The wrath to come*, God’s judgment (1 Th. 1.10). **8–10:** See Lk.3.7–9 n.; Jn.8.33. **11–12:** See Lk.12.49 n.; Acts 2.17–21; 19.1–7; 18.24–26.

3.13–17: Jesus’ baptism (Mk.1.9–11; Lk.3.21–22; Jn.1.31–34). **13–15:** Jesus recognized John’s authority and identified himself with those who responded in faith to John’s call. **16–17:** A description of the surge of certainty and self-understanding that came to Jesus at his baptism. The language, akin to Old Testament speech, portrays a spiritual experience which words cannot adequately describe. *Beloved Son*, see Mk.1.11 n.

4.1–11: Jesus’ temptation (Mk.1.12–13; Lk.4.1–13; Heb.2.18; 4.15). The accounts illustrate Jesus’ habitual refusal to allow his sense of mission to be influenced by concern for his safety or for merely practical interests. **1:** *The devil*, tempter (v. 3), and *Satan* (v. 10) are names for evil conceived as a personal will actively hostile to God (see Lk.13.11,16 n.). **2:** *Forty*, compare Ex.34.28; 1 Kg.19.8. **3:** *If you are the Son of God*; but see the declaration in 3.17. **4:** Dt.8.3. **5:** *The holy city*, Jerusalem. **6:** Ps.91.11–12. **7:** Dt.6.16. **10:** Dt.6.13.

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, and set him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will give his angels charge of you,'
and

'On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.'

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; ⁹ and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Begone, Satan! for it is written,

'You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.'

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him.

¹² Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; ¹³ and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Caper'na-um by the sea, in the territory of Zeb'ulun and Naph'tali, ¹⁴ that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ "The land of Zeb'ulun and the land of

Naph'tali,

toward the sea, across the Jordan,

Galilee of the Gentiles —

¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness

have seen a great light,

and for those who sat in the region and
shadow of death

light has dawned."

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zeb'edee and John his brother, in the boat with Zeb'edee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

²³ And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decap'olis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

⁵ Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. ² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

4.12–25: Beginnings of Jesus' activity in Galilee. **12–17:** Mk.1.14–15; Lk.4.14–15. **15–16:** Is.9.1–2. **17:** *From that time*, the arrest of John (v. 12). *The kingdom of heaven* is Matthew's usual way of expressing the equivalent phrase, "the kingdom of God," found in parallel accounts in the other gospels. In asserting that God's *kingdom is at hand* Jesus meant that all God's past dealings with his creation were coming to climax and fruition. Jesus taught both the present reality of God's rule (Lk.10.18; 11.20; 17.21) and its future realization (Mt.6.10). See Mk.1.15 n. **18–22:** Mk.1.16–20; Lk.5.1–11; Jn.1.35–42. **24:** *Demoniacs*, persons controlled in body or will, or in both, by evil forces (Mt.8.16.28; 9.32; 15.22; Mk.5.15; see Lk.13.11,16 n.). *Demons*, see Lk.4.33 n. **25:** *Decapolis*, see Mk.5.20 n.

5.1–7.27: The Sermon on the Mount sounds the keynote of the new age which Jesus came to introduce. Internal analysis and comparison with Luke's Gospel suggest that the Evangelist (in accord with his habit of synthesis) has inserted into this account of the Sermon portions of Jesus' teaching given on other occasions. **1:** *He sat down*, the usual position of Jewish rabbis while teaching (compare Lk.4.20–21).

5.3–12: The Beatitudes (Lk.6.17.20–23) proclaim God's favor toward those who aspire to live under his rule. **3:** *Poor in spirit*, those who feel a deep sense of spiritual poverty (Is.66.2). **4:** *Comforted*, the word implies strengthening

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

17 "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not

an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' ²² But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brotherⁱ shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults^j his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell^k of fire. ²³ So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵ Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; ²⁶ truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully

ⁱ Other ancient authorities insert *without cause*

^j Greek says *Raca* to (an obscure term of abuse)

^k Greek *Gehenna*

as well as consolation. **5:** Ps.37.11. **6:** Is.55.1–2; Jn.4.14; 6.48–51. **8:** Purity of *heart* is single-mindedness or sincerity, freedom from mixed motives; it is not synonymous with chastity, but includes it (Ps.24.4; Heb.12.14). *See God*, 1 Cor.13.12; 1 Jn.3.2; Rev. 22.4. **9:** *Peacemakers* are not merely "peaceable," but those who work earnestly to "make" peace. **10:** 1 Pet.3.14; 4.14. **12:** 2 Chr.36.15–16; Mt.23–3; Acts 7.52.

5.13–16: The witness of the disciples. **13:** Mk.9.49–50; Lk.14.34–35. **14:** Phil.2.15; Jn.8.12. **15:** See Mk.4.21 n. **16:** 1 Pet.2.12.

5.17–20: The relation of Jesus' message to the Jewish law was a great concern to followers with a Jewish background. **17:** *The prophets* in the Hebrew Scriptures comprise the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets (see Lk.24.27 n., 44 n.). **18:** Mk.13.31; Lk.16.17. **19:** *Relaxes*, or "sets aside." *Teaches*, Jas.3.1. **20:** *Righteousness*, one's acceptance of God's requirements and one's being accepted by God (Lk.18.10–14).

5.21–48: Illustrations of the true understanding of the Law. **21:** Ex.20.13; Dt.5.17; 16.18. **25–26:** Lk.12.57–59. **26:** *Penny*, see Lk.12.59 n. **27:** Ex.20.14; Dt.5.18. **29–30:** Mk.9.43–48; Mt.18.8–9. **31:** *It was also said*,

has already committed adultery with her in his heart.²⁹ If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.^k ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.^k

³¹ "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'³² But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ "Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'³⁴ But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.³⁷ Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.^l

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'³⁹ But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;⁴⁰ and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well;⁴¹ and if any one forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.⁴² Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?⁴⁸ You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

6 "Beware of practicing your piety before men in order to be seen by them; for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

² "Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵ "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.⁶ But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

k Greek *Gehenna* *l* Or *the evil one*

Dt.24.1–4. **32:** The expression *except . . . unchastity* occurs also in 19.9; it is absent from the accounts in Mk.10.11–12 and Lk.16.18 (compare also Rom.7.2–3; 1 Cor.7.10–11). **33–37:** Lev.19.12; Num.30.2; Dt.23.21; Mt.23.16–22; Jas.5.12. **35:** Is.66.1. **38:** Ex.21.23–24; Lev.24.19–20; Dt.19.21. Though this principle *controlled* retaliation in primitive society, it did not justify it. **39–42:** Lk.6.29–30; Rom.12.17; 1 Cor.6.7; 1 Pet.2.19; 3.9. **43–48:** Lk.6.27–28,32–36. **45:** To be *sons of God* is to pattern attitudes after God's. The words *son of* commonly mean that one shows the quality named or trait of character implied (see 23.31 n.; Lk.6.35; 10.6; Jn.8.39–47).

6.1–34: Teachings in practical piety; Jesus emphasizes a sincere response to God that identifies oneself with his purposes. **1:** 23.5. **5:** Lk.18.10–14. **9–13:** The Lord's Prayer (compare Lk.11.2–4) falls into two parts relating to God and to man; after the opening invocation, there are three petitions concerning God's glory, followed by those concerning our needs. The phrase, *on earth as it is in heaven* (v. 10), belongs to each of the first three petitions. On the basis of

7 “And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰ Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread;^m

¹² And forgive us our debts,

As we also have forgiven our debtors;

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.ⁿ

¹⁴ For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; ¹⁵ but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 “And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust^o consume and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust^o consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be

full of light; ²³ but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.^x

25 “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his span of life?^p ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.

m Or our bread for the morrow *n* Or the evil one. Other authorities, some ancient, add, in some form, *For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.* *o* Or worm *x* Mammon is a Semitic word for money or riches *p* Or to his stature

David's prayer (1 Chr.29.11–13) the early church added an appropriate concluding doxology (see note *n*). **9:** Is.63.16; 64.8. **13:** 2 Th.3.3; Jas.1.13. **14–15:** 18.35; Mk.11.25–26; Eph.4.32; Col.3.13. **16–18:** Acceptable fasting (Is.58.5). **19–21:** The uselessness of trusting in worldly goods (Jas.5.2–3). **22–23:** Lk.11.34–36. **24:** Lk.16.13. **25–33:** Lk.12.22–31. **25:** Lk.10.41; 12.11; Phil.4.6. **27:** A *cubit*, about 18 inches. “Cubit” may be used figuratively of length of life (see Ps.39.5 for a similar usage); or in the literal sense Jesus could note that growing in stature (see note *p*) is natural to life and beyond control by anxiety. **29:** 1 Kg.10.4–7. **30:** *Men of little faith* are unwilling to rest in the assurance that God cares about their lives (8.26; 14.31; 16.8). **33:** Mk.10.29–30; Lk.18.29–30.

34 “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day’s own trouble be sufficient for the day.

7 “Judge not, that you be not judged. ² For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³ Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.

6 “Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you.

7 “Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! ¹² So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

13 “Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy,^q that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. ¹⁸ A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will know them by their fruits.

21 “Not every one who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers.’

24 “Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; ²⁵ and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; ²⁷ and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it.”

28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

q Other ancient authorities read *for the way is wide and easy*

7.1–27: Illustrations of the practical meaning of Jesus message. 1–5: Judgment of others (Lk.6.37–38,41–42; Mk.4.24; Rom.2.1; 14.10). **7–11:** Encouragement to prayer (6.8; Mk.11.23–24; Jn.15.7; 1 Jn.3.22; 5.14). **12:** Lk.6.31; Mt.22.39–40; Rom.13.8–10. **13–14:** Lk.13.23–24; Jer.21.8; Ps.1; Dt.30.19; Jn.10.7; 14.6. **15–20:** Lk.6.43–45. **15:** 24.11,24; Ezek.22.27; 1 Jn.4.1; Jn.10.12. *Sheep* often symbolize a group of followers in a religious sense (Ezek.34.1–24; Lk.12.32). **16:** 3.8; 12.33–35; Lk.6.43–45. **19:** 3.10; Lk.13.6–9; Jas.3.10–12. **22:** *That day*, the day of judgment, Jesus speaks as the divine judge. **24–27:** Lk.6.47–49; Jas.1.22–25. **28:** *When Jesus finished these sayings*, this (or a similar) formula marks the conclusion of each of the five main discourses in the gospel (see Introduction and 11.1; 13.53; 19.1; 26.1). **29:** *Unlike their scribes*, Jesus speaks on his own responsibility without appeal to traditional authority (Mk.1.22; 11.18; Lk.4.32).

8 When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; ² and behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." ³ And he stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. ⁴ And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to the people."^r

5 As he entered Caper'na-um, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him ⁶ and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress." ⁷ And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." ⁸ But the centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed." ⁹ For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and he does it." ¹⁰ When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I say to you, not even^s in Israel have I found such faith. ¹¹ I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹² while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." ¹³ And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; be it done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

14 And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a

fever; ¹⁵ he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and served him. ¹⁶ That evening they brought to him many who were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."

18 Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹ And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." ²¹ Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."

23 And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵ And they went and woke him, saying, "Save, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. ²⁷ And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

28 And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes,^t two demoniacs met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce

^r Greek to them ^s Other ancient authorities read *with no one* ^t Other ancient authorities read *Gergesenes*; some, *Gerasenes* ^u Other ancient authorities read *seeing*

8.1-9.38: Events in Galilee. 8.2-4: Mk.1.40-44; Lk.5.12-14. *Leprosy*, a skin disorder of an uncertain nature. Several diseases were possibly referred to by this name (see Lev.13.1-59 n.; Num.5.1-4). Its presence excluded the sufferer from associating with others. *Make me clean*, the leper seeks not merely healing but the freedom to rejoin the Jewish community. 4: Lev.14.2-32. 5-13: Lk.7.1-10; Jn.4.46-53. The *centurion*, a non-Jewish military officer, is convinced that diseases are as obedient to Jesus as soldiers are to him. 10: *Faith* refers to the centurion's trust and recognition of Jesus' power (v. 13; Mk.11.23 n., 24 n.). 11-12: See Lk.14.15 n.; Is.49.12; 59.19; Mt.13.42,50; 22.13; 24.51; 25.30. 14-17: Mk.1.29-34; Lk.4.38-41. 16: *Demons*, see 4.24 n.; 12.22 n.; Lk.4.33 n.; 7.33 n.; 13.16 n. 17: Is.53.4. 18-22: Mk.4.35; Lk.8.22; 9.57-60. 18: *The other side*, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. 20: *Son of man*, see Mk.2.10 n. 22: *Follow me*, Jesus implies that obedience to his call must take precedence over every other duty or love (compare 10.37). *Leave the dead*, i.e. the spiritually dead, who are not alive to the greater demands of the kingdom of God. 23-27: Mk.4.36-41; Lk.8.22-24. 25: See Lk.8.24 n. 28-34: Mk.5.1-20; Lk.8.26-39. 31: See v. 16 n.

that no one could pass that way.²⁹ And behold, they cried out, “What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?”³⁰ Now a herd of many swine was feeding at some distance from them.³¹ And the demons begged him, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of swine.”³² And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the swine; and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and perished in the waters.³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, and what had happened to the demoniacs.³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their neighborhood.

9 And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city.² And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, “Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.”³ And behold; some of the scribes said to themselves, “This man is blaspheming.”⁴ But Jesus, knowing^v their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts?⁵ For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’?⁶ But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, take up your bed and go home.”⁷ And he rose and went home.⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

10 And as he sat at table^v in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came

and sat down with Jesus and his disciples.¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”¹² But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.¹³ Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

14 Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast,^w but your disciples do not fast?”¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.¹⁶ And no one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.¹⁷ Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; if it is, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

18 While he was thus speaking to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.”¹⁹ And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples.²⁰ And behold, a woman who had suffered from a hemorrhage for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment;²¹ for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment, I shall be made well.”²² Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you

^v Greek *reclined* ^w Other ancient authorities add *much or often*

9.1–8: Healing a paralytic (Mk.2.1–12; Lk.5.17–26). **1:** *His own city*, Capernaum. **8:** 7.28–29. **9–13:** Mk.2.13–17; Lk.5.27–32. **10:** Lk.7.34; 15.1–2. **13:** Hos.6.6; Mt.12.7; 15.2–6. Jesus uses a Biblical quotation to challenge a conventional religious idea (see Lk.5.32 n.). **14–17:** Mk.2.18–22; Lk.5.33–39. **15:** Jesus recognizes the principle of fasting, but denies that it fits the circumstances of his life. **16–17:** The two pictorial sayings defend the practices of John’s disciples and the practices of his own disciples; Jesus insists that the two ways should not be joined. **18–26:** Mk.5.21–43; Lk.8.40–56. **18:** *A ruler*; a leader in a synagogue. **21:** The Greek word here translated *be made well* (also v. 22; Mk.5.23,28,34; 10.52; Lk.8.36,48,50; 17.19; 18.42) carries with it the idea of rescue from impending destruc-

well." And instantly the woman was made well. ²³ And when Jesus came to the ruler's house, and saw the flute players, and the crowd making a tumult, ²⁴ he said, "Depart; for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose. ²⁶ And the report of this went through all that district.

²⁷ And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, "Have mercy on us, Son of David." ²⁸ When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to him, "yes, Lord." ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it done to you." ³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, "See that no one knows it." ³¹ But they went away and spread his fame through all that district.

³² As they were going away, behold, a dumb demoniac was brought to him. ³³ And when the demon had been cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the crowds marveled, saying, "Never was anything like this seen in Israel." ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the prince of demons."^a

³⁵ And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ pray

therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

10 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. ² The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zeb'edee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;^x ⁴ Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out, charging them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶ but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷ And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying, give without pay. ⁹ Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, ¹⁰ no bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff; for the laborer deserves his food. ¹¹ And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it, and stay with him until you depart. ¹² As you enter the house, salute it. ¹³ And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly, I say to you, it shall be more

^a Other ancient authorities omit this verse ^x Other ancient authorities read *Lebbaeus* or *Lebbaeus called Thaddaeus*

tion or from a superior power. **22:** Mk.11.23 n., 24 n. **23:** Jer.9.17–18. **24:** Jesus speaks in the perspective of the kingdom of God in which physical death is not finally destructive of a person's existence but is a temporary cessation of personal activity (and analogous to sleeping). Verse 18 and the crowd's attitude clearly assert the fact of physical death. **27–31:** 20.29–34. **29:** 9.22 n. **30:** 8.4. **32–34:** 12.22–24; Lk.11.14–15. **34:** See 12.24 n.; Mk.3.22 n.; Jn.7.20. **35–38:** 4.23–25. **36:** Mk.6.34; Mt.14.14; 15.32; Num.27.17; Ezek.34.1–6; Zech.10.2.

10.1–11.1: Commissioning and instruction of the Twelve. **10.1–4:** Mk.6.7; 3.13–19; Lk.9.1; 6.12–16. **1: Unclean spirits,** see Mk.1.23 n. **5–15:** Mk.6.8–11; Lk.9.2–5; 10.3–12. **5:** 15.21–28; Lk.9.52; Jn.4.9. **6:** 15.24. **7:** The primary message. Through acceptance, or at least openness to this message and its bearer, healing would follow (see 4.17 n.; 4.23; 9.21,35). **9:** Lk.22.35–36. **10: Tunic,** a short-sleeved garment of knee-length, held in at the waist by a girdle (Mk.1.6). **Deserves,** 1 Cor.9.14. **15:** Life and death depend on man's response to God's kingdom.

tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomor'rah than for that town.

16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, ¹⁸ and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles. ¹⁹ When they deliver you up, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour; ²⁰ for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. ²¹ Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; ²² and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. ²³ When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes.

24 "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant^y above his master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant^y like his master. If they have called the master of the house Be-el'zebul, how much more will they malign those of his household.

26 "So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops. ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can

destroy both soul and body in hell.^z ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³² So every one who acknowledges me before men, also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

34 "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; ³⁶ and a man's foes will be those of his own household. ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; ³⁸ and he who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

40 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me. ⁴¹ He who receives a prophet because he is a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. ⁴² And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

y Or slave z Greek Gehenna

Sodom and Gomorrah illustrate God's judgment on wickedness (Gen.18.16–33; ch. 19). **16–25:** 24.9,13; Mk.13.9–13; Lk.21.12–17,19. **20:** Jn.16.7–11. **21:** 10.35–36; Lk.12.52–53. **22:** *My name's sake*, "because of me and my cause." **23:** The words stress the urgency of the disciples' task. **25:** Lk.6.40; Jn.13.16; 15.20; Mt.9.34; 12.24; Mk.3.22. **26–33:** Lk.12.2–9. **28:** Heb.10.31. **29–33:** 6.26–33. **29:** See Lk.12.6 n. **31:** 12.12. **32–33:** Jesus claims to mediate God's will; a favorable response to him is a response to God (compare vv. 40–42). **34–36:** Lk.12.51–53. **35:** Mic.7.6. **37–39:** 16.24–25; Mk.8.34–35; Lk.9.23–24; 14.26–27; 17.33. **37:** Compare the stronger form of expression in Lk.14.26. **38:** A *cross*, a Roman means of execution, was carried by the condemned man to the scene of death. Jesus sees that the acceptance of his message with its promise also brings seeming destruction (v. 34). Only those who in faith accept the threat of destruction will find life (v. 39; 5.11–12; 16.24; Mk.8.34–35; 10.29–31; Lk.9.24–25; 14.27; 17.33; Jn.12.25). **42:** *Little ones*, see 18.6 n.

11 And when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

2 Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples³ and said to him, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?"⁴ And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see:⁵ the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.⁶ And blessed is he who takes no offense at me."

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken by the wind?⁸ Why then did you go out? To see a man^a clothed in soft raiment? Behold, those who wear soft raiment are in kings' houses.⁹ Why then did you go out? To see a prophet?^b Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.¹⁰ This is he of whom it is written,

'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,

who shall prepare thy way before thee.'

¹¹ Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,^c and men of violence take it by force.¹³ For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John;¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Eli'jah who is to come.¹⁵ He who has ears to hear,^d let him hear.

16 "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the market places and calling to their playmates,

¹⁷ 'We piped to you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon';¹⁹ the Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.'^e

20 Then he began to upbraid the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.²¹ "Woe to you, Chora'zin! woe to you, Beth-sa'ida! for if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.²² But I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you.²³ And you, Caper'na-um, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.²⁴ But I tell you that it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you."

25 At that time Jesus declared, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes;²⁶ yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will.^f ²⁷ All things have been delivered

a Or What then did you go out to see? A man . . .

b Other ancient authorities read What then did you go out to see? A prophet? *c* Or has been coming violently

d Other ancient authorities omit to hear *e* Other ancient authorities read children (Lk 7.35) *f* Or so it was well-pleasing before thee

11.1: *Finished*, see 7.28 n. **11.2–12.50:** Narratives illustrating the authority claimed by Jesus. **11.2–19:** Jesus and John (Lk.7.18–35; 16.16). **2–3:** *The Christ*, i.e. the Messiah who *is to come*. **4–5:** Jesus performs the works of the predicted Messiah (Is.29.18–19; 35.5–6; 61.1; compare Lk.4.18–19). **6:** Jesus invites John to answer his own question, basing his decision on what he hears of Jesus' activities interpreted in comparison with Isaiah's words (compare Lk.4.17–21). **7–15:** John was important because he introduced the new manifestation (or "coming") of God's kingdom. **10:** From Mal.3.1; compare Mk.1.2. **14:** Mal.4.5; Lk.1.17; Mk.9.11–13. Biblical prophecy depends on human acceptance of God's terms for fulfilment. If John's message were accepted, his activity would become that foretold in Elijah's name. Jesus seems not to have expected the literal return of *Elijah* (17.10–13; Mk.9.9–13). **18:** See Lk.7.33 n. **23:** Is.14.13,15. **25–30:** Lk.10.21–22. **25:** 9.13; 10.42; see 16.17 n.; Lk.10.21–22; 24.16. **27:** Jesus claimed a special

to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.² But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath."³ He said to them, "Have you not read what David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him:⁴ how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?⁵ Or have you not read in the law how on the sabbath the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless?⁶ I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.⁷ And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless.⁸ For the Son of man is lord of the sabbath."

⁹ And he went on from there, and entered their synagogue,¹⁰ And behold, there was a man with a withered hand. And they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" so

that they might accuse him.¹¹ He said to them, "What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?¹² Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath."¹³ Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And the man stretched it out, and it was restored, whole like the other.¹⁴ But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him.

¹⁵ Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all,¹⁶ and ordered them not to make him known.¹⁷ This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁸ "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,
my beloved with whom my soul is well
pleased.

I will put my Spirit upon him,
and he shall proclaim justice to the
Gentiles.

¹⁹ He will not wrangle or cry aloud,
nor will any one hear his voice in the
streets;

²⁰ he will not break a bruised reed
or quench a smoldering wick,
till he brings justice to victory;

²¹ and in his name will the Gentiles hope."

²² Then a blind and dumb demoniac was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw.²³ And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?"²⁴ But when the Pharisees

relation to God which he could share with others (Jn.3.35; 13.3). **29:** The rabbis spoke of the *yoke* of the Law. Jesus regarded his claim as more demanding and more rewarding (5.17–20).

12.1–14: Jesus and sabbath laws (Mk.2.23–3.6; Lk.6.1–11). **1:** Dt.23.25. **2:** The objection rested on the traditional interpretation that plucking grain by hand was an activity forbidden by Ex.20.8–11. **3–4:** 1 Sam.21.1–6; Lev.24.5–9. **5:** Num.28.9–10. **6:** Since no penalty was exacted from those who set aside provisions of the Law for the sake of some human need or some more significant service to God, Jesus' disciples eat because of their need and serve him who is greater than the institutions of the Law (see vv. 41–42). **7:** Hos.6.6; Mt.9.13. **8:** Jesus claims, by virtue of his mission as the Messiah, authority over man's obedience to God (11.27; Is.5.1–18). **11–12:** The rabbis agreed with the principle of attending to accidental injury and danger on the sabbath, but they thought that chronic conditions should wait (Lk.13.14). For Jesus it was important to restore a person to useful life. **12:** 10.31.

12.15–21: Work of healing (Mk.3.7–12; Lk.6.17–19; 4.40). **17–21:** Is.42.1–4.

12.22–37: Sources of Jesus' power (Mk.3.20–30; Lk.11.14–23; 12.10). **22–24:** The dumbness here said to be caused by demonic possession is said in Lk.11.14 to describe the demon itself. The Biblical writers speak either of *healing* the victim or casting out the demon (v. 24; 9.32–33; Lk.11.14–15). **23:** *Son of David*, a title of the Messiah (21.9). **24:** The issue is how to account for Jesus' manifest power. The Pharisees attribute it to evil forces hostile to

heard it they said, "It is only by Be-el'zebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons."²⁵ Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand;²⁶ and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?²⁷ And if I cast out demons by Be-el'zebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.²⁸ But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.²⁹ Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.³⁰ He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.³¹ Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.³² And whoever says a word against the Son of man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

33 "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit.³⁴ You brood of vipers! how can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.³⁵ The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment men will render account for every careless word they utter;³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you."³⁹ But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.⁴¹ The men of Nin'evah will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.⁴² The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

43 "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he passes through waterless places seeking rest, but he finds none.⁴⁴ Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes he finds it empty, swept, and put in order.⁴⁵ Then he goes and brings with him seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. So shall it be also with this evil generation."

46 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him.^g ⁴⁸ But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?"⁴⁹ And

g Other ancient authorities insert verse 47, *Some one told him, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak to you"*

mankind (see Lk.7.33 n.). *Beelzebul*, see 2 Kg.1.2 n.; Mk.3.22 n. **27:** *Your sons*, your disciples (compare 1 Pet.5.13). Exorcising demons was not limited to Jesus and his followers (7.22–23; Mk.9.38; Acts 19.13–19). **28:** Lk.4.18–20. **31–32:** The unforgivable sin is the utter rebellion against God that denies him as the doer of his own acts (Lk.12.10). **32:** Mk.3.28–30. **33–36:** 7.16–20; Mk.7.14–23; Lk.6.43–45. **33:** *Make*, recognize that fruit and tree will be alike (Jas.3.11–12). **36:** *Careless*, useless; "barren" in Jas.2.20. **37:** Compare Rom.2.6.

12.38–42: Request for a sign (Lk.11.16,29–32). **39:** *Adulterous* was used by Old Testament prophets to describe Israel's turning away from God (Jer.3.8; Ezek.23.37; Hos.2.2–10). *Sign*, compare v. 40. **40:** *Whale*, "sea monster" (compare Jon.1.17). **41:** Jon.3.5; Mt.11.20–24; 12.6. **42:** 1 Kg.10.1–10; 2 Chr.9.1–9.

12.43–45: The return of the unclean spirit (Lk.11.24–26; see Mk.1.23 n.). **43:** Waterless places, or deserts, supposed to be the favorite abode of demons (compare Is.13.21–22; 34.14). **44:** *My house*, the man himself. *Empty*, though evil has been temporarily expelled, nothing good has been put in its place.

12.46–50: Jesus' true family (Mk.3.31–35; Lk.8.19–21). See 13.55 n.

stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers!"⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother."

13 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.² And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat there; and the whole crowd stood on the beach.³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow.⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they had not much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil,⁶ but when the sun rose they were scorched; and since they had no root they withered away.⁷ Other seeds fell upon thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.⁹ He who has ears,^h let him hear."

10 Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"¹¹ And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.¹² For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.¹³ This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.¹⁴ With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which says:

'You shall indeed hear but never understand,
and you shall indeed see but never perceive.'

¹⁵ For this people's heart has grown dull,
and their ears are heavy of hearing,
and their eyes they have closed,
lest they should perceive with their eyes,
and hear with their ears,
and understand with their heart,
and turn for me to heal them.'

¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.¹⁷ Truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.¹⁹ When any one hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path.²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.ⁱ ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.²³ As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

h Other ancient authorities add here and in verse 43 to hear *i* Or stumbles

13.1–52: Teaching in parables (Mk.4.1–34; Lk.8.4–18; 13.18–21). **1:** *The sea*, of Galilee. **3:** *Parables* are stories describing situations in everyday life which, as Jesus used them, convey a spiritual meaning. In general the teaching of each parable relates to a single point, and apart from this the details may, or may not, have a particular meaning. Jesus used this method of teaching because: (a) it gave vivid, memorable expression to his teachings; (b) it led those who heard to reflect on his words and bear responsibility for their decision to accept or oppose his claim; (c) it probably reduced specific grounds for contention by hostile listeners. **3b–8:** The sower, explained in vv. 18–23 (see Mk.4.1–9). **11:** The disciples heard and accepted the message about God's kingdom and by their faith had access to deeper understanding (see Mk.4.11 n.). **12:** 25.29; Mk.4.24–25; Lk.8.18; 19.26. **13:** The parables do not obscure truth but present it; men receive the message through their physical senses but do not comprehend (see 11.25 n.). **14–15:** Is.6.9–10; Mk.8.18; see Acts 28.26 n. **16–17:** See Lk.10.23–24 n. **17:** *See . . . hear*, Jesus' message about God's kingdom. **18–23:** Response

24 Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ So when the planets came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷ And the servants^j of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants^j said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

31 Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

33 He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, till it was all leavened."

34 All this Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable. ³⁵ This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet:^k

"I will open my mouth in parables,

I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."

36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷ He answered, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous, ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.

j Or slaves *k* Other ancient authorities read *the prophet Isaiah*

to Jesus' message affected by the circumstances of human life. **22:** 19.23. **24–30: Weeds in the wheat.** God allows good and evil to exist together until the close of human history (vv. 36–43). **31–32: The mustard seed.** (Lk.13.18–19). The beginnings of God's kingdom are small, but it has an inherent nature that will grow to its intended end, startlingly different in size from its beginning. **32:** Dan.4.12. **33: Leaven** (Lk.13.20–21). God's rule, like *leaven* working in a hidden way, will pervade man's life, giving it a new quality. **35:** *The prophet*, i.e. Asaph the seer (2 Chr.29.30), the author of Ps. 78, from which (v. 2) the quotation is taken. **42:** See Lk.12.49 n. **43:** Dan.12.3. **44–46: Hidden treasure and the pearl of great value.** **44:** Some men respond in whole-hearted dedication to Jesus' message without any other thought than to have what it yields. **45–46:** Some men dedicate themselves to God's kingdom because, being able to judge the value of other claims being made on them, they value it more. **47–50: The drag-**

51 "Have you understood all this?" They said to him, "Yes." 52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

53 And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, 54 and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?" 57 And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." 58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

14 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus; 2 and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." 8 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Hero'di-as, his brother Philip's wife; 4 because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Hero'di-as danced before the company, and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever

she might ask. 8 Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." 9 And the king was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; 10 he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 And his disciples came and took the body and buried it; and they went and told Jesus.

13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14 As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick. 15 When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." 16 Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." 17 They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." 18 And he said, "Bring them here to me." 19 Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 21 And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

j Or slaves *k* Other ancient authorities read *the prophet Isaiah* *l* Other ancient authorities read *his brother's wife*

net. 52: *Scribe*, an expert in the Mosaic law, having become a disciple of Jesus is able to preserve past insights and enlarge them.

13.53–17.27: Events of decisive acceptance or rejection of Jesus. 13.53–58: Rejection at home. 53: Finished, see 7.28 n. **54: His own country**, Nazareth (Lk.4.16,23). **55: Brothers**, regarded by Protestants as children of Mary, younger than Jesus. In Semitic usage, besides its ordinary meaning, the word *brothers* may also refer to persons of varying degrees of blood relationship; here (and in Mt.12.46; Mk.3.31–32; 6.3; Lk.8.19–20; Jn.2.12; 7.3,5; Acts 1.14; 1 Cor.9.5; Gal.1.19) Catholic tradition regards them as relatives of Jesus, not blood brothers (see also Mt.1.25 n.; Lk.2.7 n.). **58:** See Mk.6.5–6 n.

14.1–12: Death of John (Mk.6.14–29; Lk.9.7–9). **1:** *Herod Antipas*, son of Herod the Great *Tetrarch*, ruler of a minor political unit. **3:** *Philip*, not the tetrarch of Lk.3.1, but a half-brother of *Herod Antipas*. **4:** Lev.18.16; 20.21. **6:** *The daughter of Herodias* was Salome.

14.13–21: Five thousand fed (Mk.6.30–44; Lk.9.10–17; Jn.6.1–13). **13:** After John's death Jesus faced a new stage in his life (compare his reaction to John's imprisonment, Mk.1.14–15). **14:** 20.25–28.

22 Then he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land,^m beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. ²⁷ But immediately he spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."

28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." ²⁹ He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; ³⁰ but when he saw the wind,ⁿ he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

34 And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennes'aret. ³⁵ And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent round to all that region and brought to him all that were sick, ³⁶ and besought him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well.

15 Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, ² "Why do your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat." ³ He answered them, "And why do you transgress the commandment of

God for the sake of your tradition? ⁴ For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die.' ⁵ But you say, 'If any one tells his father or his mother, What you would have gained from me is given to God,'^o he need not honor his father.' ⁶ So, for the sake of your tradition, you have made void the word^p of God. ⁷ You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

⁸ 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁹ in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'"

10 And he called the people to him and said to them, "Hear and understand: ¹¹ not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man." ¹² Then the disciples came and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?" ¹³ He answered, "Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides. And if a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit." ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, "Explain the parable to us." ¹⁶ And he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and so passes on?^q ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

m Other ancient authorities read *was out on the sea*

n Other ancient authorities read *strong wind*

o Or *an offering* *p* Other ancient authorities read *law*

q Or *is evacuated*

14.22–36: Jesus walks on water (Mk.6.45–52; Jn.6.15–21). **24:** A *furlong*, about one-eighth of a mile. **25:** The *fourth watch*, see Mk.6.48 n. **26:** Lk.24.37. **33:** Mk.6.51–52.

15.1–20: Tradition of the elders (Mk.7.1–23). **2:** The *tradition of the elders*, the rabbinical exposition of the Law of Moses. **4:** Ex.20.12; Dt.5.16; Ex.21.17; Lev.20.9. **7–9:** Is.29.13 (see Mk.7.6–7 n.). **10–20:** The teaching here depends on the principle in the Law that certain physical conditions can and do render an individual unfit to share in the worship of the community. **11:** *Defiles*, renders unfit to share in public ritual (Acts 10.14–15; 1 Tim.4.3). **13:** Is.60.21. **14:** Lk.6.39; Mt.23.16,24. **19–20:** Violations of the rights and interests of another hinder worship (5.23–24).

21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely possessed by a demon." 23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26 And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." 27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly.

29 And Jesus went on from there and passed along the Sea of Galilee. And he went up on the mountain, and sat down there. 30 And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the dumb, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them, 31 so that the throng wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way." 33 And the disciples said to him, "Where are we to get bread enough in the

desert to feed so great a crowd?" 34 And Jesus said to them, "How many loaves have you?" They said, "Seven, and a few small fish." 35 And commanding the crowd to sit down on the ground, 36 he took the seven loaves and the fish, and having given thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. 37 And they all ate and were satisfied; and they took up seven baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 38 Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children. 39 And sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Mag'adan.

16 And the Pharisees and Sad'ducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather; for the sky is red.' 3 And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. 4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

5 When the disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to bring any bread. 6 Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees." 7 And they discussed it among themselves, saying, "We brought no bread." 8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, "O men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves the fact that you have no bread? 9 Do you not yet

r Other ancient authorities omit the following words to the end of verse 3

15.21–28: The Canaanite woman (Mk.7.24–30). **22:** The woman, though a Gentile, speaks to Jesus as the Jewish Messiah. **24:** 10.6,23. Jesus consistently said that his primary mission was to call Jews back to God. The Gentile woman's claim must be based on her own personal acceptance of his message. The distinction is between his mission and his willingness to respond to faith wherever found. **27:** The woman accepts Jesus' mission and as a Gentile asks his help.

15.29–31: Healings (Mk.7.31–37).

15.32–39: Four thousand fed (see Mk.8.1–10 n.). **39:** *Magadan* was apparently on the west side of the Sea of Galilee.

16.1–4: Demand for signs (Mk.8.11–13; Lk.11.16,29; 12.54–56). **3:** *The signs of the times* may refer to 15.29–31; compare 11.2–6. **4:** See 12.39 n., 40 n.; Jon.3.4–5.

16.5–12: Leaven of the Pharisees (Mk.8.14–21; Lk.12.1). **5:** *The other side*, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. **6:** *Leaven*, see Mk.8.15 n. **9:** 14.17–21. **10:** 15.34–38.

perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? ¹¹ How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees." ¹² Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sad'ducees.

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesare'a Philip'pi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?"

¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Eli'jah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter,^s and on this rock^t I will build my church, and the powers of death^u shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suf-

fer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you." ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance^v to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men."

24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?

²⁷ For the Son of man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done. ²⁸ Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

17 And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain apart. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light. ³ And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Eli'jah, talking with him. ⁴ And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is well that we are here; if you wish, I will make three

⁵ s Greek *Petros* ^t Greek *petra* ^u Greek *the gates of Hades* ^v Greek *stumbling block*

16.13–23: Peter's confession (Mk.8.27–33; Lk.9.18–22). 13: See Mk.8.27 n. *Son of man* here is equivalent to "I." 16: Peter asserts that Jesus is the Messiah, not merely one of the prophets (v. 14). He identifies Jesus with the figure of Mal.3.1–4 (compare Mk.1.2; Mt.1.16; Jn.1.49; 11.27). 17: *Simon* was Peter's personal name. *Bar-Jona* identifies Simon as "son of John." *Flesh and blood*, human beings (1 Cor.15.50; Gal.1.16; Eph.6.12). *Revealed*, understanding spiritual realities involves God's disclosure (see 11.25 n.; Lk.24.16; 1 Cor.1.18–25; 2.6–16). 18: The Greek text involves a play on two words, *Petros* ("Peter") and *petra* ("rock"). Palestinian Aramaic, which Jesus usually spoke, used the same word for both proper name and common noun: "You are *Kepha* [Cephas; compare 1 Cor.15.5; Gal.2.9], and on this *kepha* [rock] I will build . . ." For the view that all the apostles also form the foundation of the church, see Eph.2.20; Rev.21.14. *Church*, see Gal.1.13 n. 19: *The keys of the kingdom* are a symbol of Peter's power as the leader of the church. *Bind and loose* are technical rabbinic terms meaning "forbid" and "permit" some action about which a question has arisen. Later the authority of binding and loosing was also conferred upon all the apostles (18.18). 20: See Mk.8.30 n. 21: See Lk.9.22 n. 22–23: See Mk.8.32 n., 33 n.

16.24–28: On discipleship (Mk.8.34–9.1; Lk.9.23–27). 24: See 10.38 n. 25: See Mk.8.35 n. 26: Here *life* is not merely physical existence, but the higher or spiritual life of man, his real self (compare Lk.9.25; 12.15). 27: Ps.62.12; Mt.10.33; Lk.12.8–9; Rom.2.6; 1 Jn.2.28; Rev.22.12. 28: See Mk.9.1 n.; 1 Cor.16.22; 1 Th.4.15–18; Jas.5.7; Rev.1.7.

17.1–8: The transfiguration. See notes on the parallel passages, Mk.9.2–8; Lk.9.28–36.

booths here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah." ⁵ He was still speaking, when lo, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son," with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, and were filled with awe. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and have no fear." ⁸ And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

⁹ And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of man is raised from the dead." ¹⁰ And the disciples asked him, "Then why do the scribes say that first Eli'jah must come?" ¹¹ He replied, "Eli'jah does come, and he is to restore all things; ¹² but I tell you that Eli'jah has already come, and they did not know him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of man will suffer at their hands." ¹³ Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

¹⁴ And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and kneeling before him said, ¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. ¹⁶ And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus

privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁰ He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you."^x

²² As they were gathering^y in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³ and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.

²⁴ When they came to Caper'na-um, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, "Does not your teacher pay the tax?" ²⁵ He said, "Yes." And when he came home, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their sons or from others?" ²⁶ And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. ²⁷ However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, ³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles him-

w Or my Son, my (or the) Beloved *x* Other ancient authorities insert verse 21, "But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting" *y* Other ancient authorities read *abode*

17.9–13: Prophecies about Elijah (Mk.9.9–13). **9:** See Mk.8.30 n. **10:** See 11.14 n. **12:** *Elijah has already come*, in the person of John the Baptist.

17.14–21: An epileptic child healed (Mk.9.14–29; Lk.9.37–42). **15:** To be *epileptic* was attributed to the baleful influences of the moon, a demonic force (compare Ps.121.6). **20:** *Little faith* as distinguished from unbelief (13.58). Jesus' saying is in figurative language; faith is concerned with God's will, not with moving mountains (compare 21.21–22; Mk.11.22–23; Lk.17.6; 1 Cor.13.2; Jas.1.6).

17.22–23: The Passion foretold a second time (Mk.9.30–32; Lk.9.43–45). Compare 16.21; 20.17–19.

17.24–27: Money for the temple tax. **24:** The half-shekel tax was paid by Jewish males annually to support the temple. On the value see 26.15 n. (Ex.30.13; 38.26).

18.1–35: Sayings on humility and forgiveness. **1–5:** True greatness (Mk.9.33–37; Lk.9.46–48). **3:** *Turn and become like children*, turn away from self-chosen goals and relate oneself to God as to a father. Childlike relations to a

self like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me;⁶ but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,^z it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 “Woe to the world for temptations to sin!^a For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the man by whom the temptation comes!⁸ And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin,^z cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire.⁹ And if your eye causes you to sin,^z pluck it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell^b of fire.

10 “See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.^c ¹² What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray?¹³ And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray.¹⁴ So it is not the will of my^d Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

15 “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of

two or three witnesses.¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

21 Then Peter came up and said to him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?”²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.^e

23 “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents;^f ²⁵ and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, ‘Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’²⁷ And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt.²⁸ But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii;^g and seizing him

z Greek *causes . . . to stumble* *a* Greek *stumbling blocks* *b* Greek *Gehenna* *c* Other ancient authorities add verse 11, *For the Son of man came to save the lost* *d* Other ancient authorities read *your* *e* Or *seventy-seven times* *f* This talent was more than fifteen years’ wages of a laborer *g* The denarius was a day’s wage for a laborer

parent, not childish behavior, are in view (Mk.10.15; Lk.18.17; 1 Pet.2.2). 6: *Little ones*, disciples of Jesus, whom he calls “children” (Mk.10.24; compare Mt.11.25).

18:7–9: **Warnings of hell** (Mk.9.42–48; Lk.17.1–2). 8–9: In vivid language Jesus speaks of the terrible danger in yielding to temptation (5.29–30).

18:10–14: **The lost sheep** (Lk.15.3–7). 10: *Little ones*, see v. 6 n. *Angels*, see Acts 12.15 n.

18:15–20: **Discipline among followers** (Lk.17.3). 1 Cor.6.1–6; Gal.6.1; Jas.5.19–20; Lev.19.17. 16: Dt.19.15. 17: The guilty person excludes himself from the group of followers. 18: See 16.19 n.; Jn.20.21–23 n.

18:21–35: **Forgiveness**. 21–22: Lk.17.4. Forgiveness is beyond calculating. 23: 25.19. 25: Lk.7.42. 26: 8.2; 17.14. 32–33: Lk.7.41–43.

by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe,'²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt.

³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me;³³ and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers,^h till he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

19 Now when Jesus had finished these sayings, he went away from Galilee and entered the region of Judea beyond the Jordan;² and large crowds followed him, and he healed them there.

3 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" ⁴ He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female,⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'?⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."⁷ They said to him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" ⁸ He said to them, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from

the beginning it was not so. ⁹ And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity,^j and marries another, commits adultery."^k

10 The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient to marry."¹¹ But he said to them, "Not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. ¹² For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."

13 Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people;¹⁴ but Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."¹⁵ And he laid his hands on them and went away.

16 And behold, one came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" ¹⁷ And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."¹⁸ He said to him, "Which?" And Jesus said, "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,¹⁹ Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."²⁰ The young man said to him, "All these I have

h Greek torturers *j* Other ancient authorities, after unchastity, read *makes her commit adultery* *k* Other ancient authorities insert *and he who marries a divorced woman commits adultery*

19.1–20.34: From Galilee to Jerusalem (Mk.10.1–52; Lk.18.15–19.27).

19.1–12: Marriage and divorce (Mk.10.1–12). **1:** *Finished*, see 7.28 n. **3:** The Mosaic law gives no answer to this question and the rabbis differed in their opinions. **4–6:** Gen.1.27; 2.24. Jesus appeals to God's purpose of unity in marriage as shown in the account of creation. **7:** Dt.24.1–4. **8:** See Mk.10.5 n. **9:** See 5.32 n.; Lk.16.18; 1 Cor.7.10–13. **11–12:** Jesus recognizes a place for voluntary celibacy in the service of God's kingdom (compare 1 Cor.7.1–9).

19.13–15: Blessing the children (Mk.10.13–16; Lk.18.15–17). **14:** See Mk.10:15 n.; compare Mt.18.2–4; 1 Cor.14.20.

19.16–30: The rich young man (Mk.10.17–31; Lk.18.18–30). **16:** Lk.10.25; Lev.18.5. The question concerns the way of life which Jesus will guarantee as satisfying God (see Lk.18.26 n.). **17:** Jesus replies that the good way of life is obedience to God's will (15.2–3,6). **18:** Ex.20.12–16; Dt.5.16–20; Rom.13.9; Jas.2.11. **19:** Lev.19.18; Mt.22.39;

observed; what do I still lack?" ²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

²² When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

²³ And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. ²⁴ Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁵ When the disciples heard this they were greatly astonished, saying, "Who then can be saved?" ²⁶ But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." ²⁷ Then Peter said in reply, "Lo, we have left everything and followed you. What then shall we have?" ²⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And every one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold,^l and inherit eternal life. ³⁰ But many that are first will be last, and the last first.

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius^m a day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ And going out about the third hour he saw

others standing idle in the market place; ⁴ and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. ⁵ Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. ⁶ And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing; and he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' ⁸ And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' ⁹ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you, and go; I choose to give to this last as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?'ⁿ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first last."

¹⁷ And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside, and

l Other ancient authorities read *manifold* *m* The denarius was a day's wage for a laborer *n* Or is your eye evil because I am good?

Rom.13.8; Jas.2.8–9. **21:** Jesus consistently turned men's attention from concern over their own religious standing, calling them to involve themselves in the basic, vital interests of others. Neither wealth, poverty, nor formal piety was so important as sharing in the working out of God's life-giving design for all men (5.23–24,43–48; 6.33). Eternal life will be found through utter dependence on God, not through a ritual that wealth makes possible (see Lk.12.33 n.; Acts 2.44–45; 4.34,35). **24:** See Mk.10.25 n. **28:** *The new world* refers to the consummation of God's purpose (compare Rom.8.18–25). **29:** *Inherit eternal life* means *enter the kingdom of God* (vv. 23,24), and *inherit the kingdom* (25.34). **30:** 20.16; Mk.10.31; Lk.13.30.

20.1–16: Laborers in the vineyard. **1:** *Early*, approximately 6 a.m. **3:** About nine a.m. **5:** About noon and three p.m. **6:** About five p.m. **8:** Lev.19.13; Dt.24.14–15. **9:** *Denarius*, smaller coins existed (see Lk.12.59 n.); therefore payment could have been made on an hourly basis. **14:** The point of the parable is the willingness of the owner to exceed conventional practices, and his freedom to do so within the limits of agreement. **15:** The first sentence is not a statement of economic theory except as it claims the right to enter into differing contracts. The second sentence expresses the sense of the Greek text, which is literally translated in note *n*. **16:** Compare 19.30.

20.17–19: The Passion foretold a third time (Mk.10.32–34; Lk.18.31–34); compare 16.21; 17.22.

on the way he said to them,¹⁸ "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death,¹⁹ and deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified, and he will be raised on the third day."

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something.²¹ And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom."

²² But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?" They said to him, "We are able."²³ He said to them, "You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those whom it has been prepared by my Father."

²⁴ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers.²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them."

²⁶ It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant,²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave;²⁸ even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

29 And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him.³⁰ And behold, two blind men sitting by the roadside, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out,^o "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"³¹ The crowd

rebuked them, telling them to be silent; but they cried out the more, "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"³² And Jesus stopped and called them, saying, "What do you want me to do for you?"³³ They said to him, "Lord, let our eyes be opened."³⁴ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight and followed him.

21 And when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Beth'phage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,² saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me."³ If any one says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and he will send them immediately."⁴ This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying,

⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion,
Behold, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on an ass,
and on a colt, the foal of an ass."

⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them;⁷ they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon.⁸ Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.

⁹ And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

¹⁰ And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"¹¹ And the

o Other ancient authorities insert *Lord*

20.20–28: James and John seek honor (Mk.10.35–45; Lk.22.24–27). **22:** *Cup*, see Lk.22.42 n. **23:** Acts 12.2; Rev.1.9; Mt.13.11. **26:** See Mk.9.35. **28:** 26.39; 1 Tim.2.5–6; Jn.13.15–16; Tit.2.14; 1 Pet.1.18. The thought seems to be based on Is. ch. 53.

20.29–34: Two blind men of Jericho (Mk.10.46–52; Lk.18.35–43). Jesus responds not to the Messianic title *Son of David* (v. 30) but to the cry of need (v. 34; compare 15.22–28).

21.1–27.66: The last week (Mk.11.1–15.47; Lk.19.28–23.56).

21.1–9: Palm Sunday (Mk.11.1–10; Lk.19.28–38; Jn.12.12–18). **1:** See Mk.11.1 n. **5:** Is. 62.11; Zech.9.9. The Hebrew text refers not to two animals but to one. The reference to the two in v. 7 may have arisen through misunderstanding the form of Hebrew poetic expression in Zech.9.9. **8:** Tokens of honor (2 Kg.9.13). **9:** Ps.118.26. *Hosanna*, originally a Hebrew invocation addressed to God, meaning, "O save!"; later it was used as a cry of joyous acclamation. **11:** The identification reflects an unchanged attitude toward Jesus. His parable (see Mk.11.1 n.) is seen and not understood (Jn.6.14; 7.40; Acts 3.22; Mk.6.15; Lk.13.33).

crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee."

12 And Jesus entered the temple of God^p and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.¹³ He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you make it a den of robbers."

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant;¹⁶ and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read,

'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast brought perfect praise'?"

¹⁷ And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.

18 In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he was hungry.¹⁹ And seeing a fig tree by the wayside he went to it, and found nothing on it but leaves only. And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once.²⁰ When the disciples saw it they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?"²¹ And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and never doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will be done.²² And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith."

23 And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"²⁴ Jesus answered them, "I also will ask you a question; and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things.²⁵ The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or from men?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"²⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' we are afraid of the multitude; for all hold that John was a prophet."²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

28 "What do you think? A man had two sons; and he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'²⁹ And he answered, 'I will not'; but afterward he repented and went.³⁰ And he went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go.³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him.

33 "Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it,

p Other ancient authorities omit of God

21.12–17: Cleansing the temple (Mk.11.11,15–19; Lk.19.45–48; Jn.2.13–17). **12:** The animals for sale were acceptable for sacrifice; the money changers converted Gentile coins into Jewish money that could properly be presented in the temple (Ex.30.13; Lev.1.14). **13:** Is.56.7; Jer.7.11. **15:** Lk.19.39; Mt.21.9. *Hosanna*, see v.9 n. **16:** Ps.8.2.

21.18–22: Fig tree cursed (Mk.11.12–14,20–25). See Mk.11.13 n. **19:** The leaves of the fig tree normally appear after the fruit. **21:** See 17.20 n.

21.23–32: Jesus' authority (Mk.11.27–33; Lk.20.1–8). Jn.2.18–22. **26:** 11.9; 14.5; Lk.1.76. **27:** Jesus declined to answer because his listeners declined to heed. **28–32:** 20.1; 21.33; Lk.15.11–32. **32:** Lk.7.29–30. *The way of righteousness* led to reconciliation with God by Faith.

21.33–46: Parable of the vineyard (Mk.12.1–12; Lk.20.9–19). **33:** Compare Is.5.1–7, which forms the background of Jesus' parable. **34:** 22.3. **41:** 8.11; Acts 13.46; 18.6; 28.28. **42:** Jesus agrees with his listeners' answer (v.41) and quotes Ps.118.22–23 to support his teaching (Acts 4.11; 1 Pet.2.7).

and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country.³⁴ When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, to get his fruit;³⁵ and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.³⁶ Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them.³⁷ Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.'³⁹ And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him.⁴⁰ When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons."

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?

⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it."^q

45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them.⁴⁶ But when they tried to arrest him, they feared the multitudes, because they held him to be a prophet.

22 And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ² "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son,³ and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come.⁴ Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, Behold, I have made ready my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves

are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.'⁵ But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm, another to his business,⁶ while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.⁷ The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.⁸ Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy.'⁹ Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.'¹⁰ And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 "But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment;¹² and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless.¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen."

15 Then the Pharisees went and took counsel how to entangle him in his talk.¹⁶ And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Hero'dians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God truthfully, and care for no man; for you do not regard the position of men.¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites?¹⁹ Show me the money for the tax." And they brought him a coin.^r ²⁰ And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?"²¹ They said, "Caesar's."

q Other ancient authorities add verse 44, "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but when it falls on any one, it will crush him" *r* Greek a denarius

22.1-14: The marriage feast (Lk.14.16-24). **3:** 21.34. **10:** 13.47. **13:** 8.12.

22.15-22: Paying taxes to Caesar (Mk.12.13-17; Lk.20.20-26). **15:** Mk.3.6; 8.15. **16:** *Herodians*, Mk.3.6 n. In asking Jesus for a pronouncement affecting all Jews, his enemies thought to bring him into conflict with sectarian views. **17:** If Jesus approved paying taxes he would offend the nationalistic parties; if he disapproved payment he could be reported as disloyal to the empire. **21:** Rom.13.7; 1 Pet.2.17.

Then he said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard it, they marveled; and they left him and went away.

²³ The same day Sad'ducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection; and they asked him a question, ²⁴ saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies, having no children, his brother must marry the widow, and raise up children for his brother.' ²⁵ Now there were seven brothers among us; the first married, and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother. ²⁶ So too the second and third, down to the seventh. ²⁷ After them all, the woman died. ²⁸ In the resurrection, therefore, to which of the seven will she be wife? For they all had her."

²⁹ But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰ For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels^s in heaven. ³¹ And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, ³² 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." ³³ And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sad'ducees, they came together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" ³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your

soul, and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, ⁴² saying, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." ⁴³ He said to them, "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit,^t calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴ 'The Lord said to my Lord,

Sit at my right hand,

till I put thy enemies under thy feet'?"

⁴⁵ If David thus calls him Lord, how is he his son?" ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did any one dare to ask him any more questions.

23 Then said Jesus to the crowds and to his disciples, ² "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; ³ so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice. ⁴ They bind heavy burdens, hard to bear,^u and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. ⁵ They do all their deeds to be seen by men; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, ⁶ and they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷ and salutations in the market places, and being called rabbi by men. ⁸ But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one

^s Other ancient authorities add *of God* ^t Or *David in the Spirit* ^u Other ancient authorities omit *hard to bear*

22.23–33: Question about the resurrection (Mk.12.18–27; Lk.20.27–40). **23:** Belief in the *resurrection* was held by the Pharisees in Jesus' day, but rejected by the Sadducees (Acts 4.1–2; 23.6–10). **24:** Dt.25.5. **29:** The Sadducees fail to see God's purpose and do not trust his *power*. **31–32:** Ex.3.6. The idea here is that men who are related to God in faith have life even though physically dead. Resurrection is the divine act by which men will achieve the fullness of life intended in creation and lost through sin and death (see Lk.20.34–36 n.).

22.34–40: The great commandment (Mk.12.28–34; Lk.10.25–28). **37:** Dt.6.5. **39:** Lev.19.18; Compare Mt.19.19; Rom.13.9; Gal.5.14; Jas.2.8. **40:** The Law contains many ways of applying to life the principle of love.

22.41–46: David's son (Mk.12.35–37; Lk.20.41–44). **44:** The first *Lord* refers to God, the second *Lord* is taken here to refer to the Messiah (see Ps.110.1; Acts 2.34–35; Heb.1.13; 10.12–13).

23.1–36: Woe to scribes and Pharisees. **4:** Lk.11.46; Mt.11.28–30; Acts 15.10. **5:** 6.1; 5.16; Ex.13.9; Dt.6.8. **6–7:** Mk.12.38–39; Lk.11.43; 14.7–11; 20.46. **8:** Jas.3.1. **12:** Lk.14.11; 18.14; Mt.18.4; 1 Pet.5.6. **13:** Lk.11.52. **15:**

teacher, and you are all brethren.⁹ And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven.¹⁰ Neither be called masters, for you have one master, the Christ.¹¹ He who is greatest among you shall be your servant;¹² whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in."¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you traverse sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell^w as yourselves.

16 "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If any one swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.'¹⁷ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?¹⁸ And you say, 'If any one swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if any one swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.'¹⁸ You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred?²⁰ So he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it;²¹ and he who swears by the temple, swears by it and by him who dwells in it;²² and he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it.

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and faith; these you ought to have done, without

neglecting the others.²⁴ You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you cleanse the outside of the cup and of the plate, but inside they are full of extortion and rapacity.²⁶ You blind Pharisee! first cleanse the inside of the cup and of the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like white-washed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.²⁸ So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ saying, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.'³¹ Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.³³ You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?^w ³⁴ Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from town to town,³⁵ that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechari'ah

v Other authorities add here (or after verse 12) verse 14, *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows' houses and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive the greater condemnation* w Greek *Gehenna*

Acts 2.10; 6.5; 13.43. 16: 5.33–37; 15.14. 17: Ex.30.29. 21: 1 Kg.8.13; Ps.26.8. 23–24: Lk.11.42; Lev.27.30; Mic.6.8. 25–26: Lk.11.39–41; Mk.7.4. 27–28: Lk.11.44; Acts 23.3; Ps.5.9. 28: See Lk.20.20 n. 29–32: Lk.11.47–48; Acts 7.51–53. 31: *Sons of* has two meanings: descendants, or, those of similar character. The scribes and Pharisees would admit to being descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Jesus insists that their attitudes are also similar (v. 28). 33: 3.7; Lk.3.7. 34–36: Lk.11.49–51. 34: See Lk.11.49 n.; Mt.10.17,23; 2 Chr.36.15–16. *Prophets and wise men and scribes* are terms of Jewish origin applied here to Christian missionaries. 35: Gen.4.8; Heb.11.4; 2 Chr.24.20–22; Zech.1.1. The identifying words *son of Barachiah* (not in Lk.11.51) probably were mistakenly added to the text of Matthew at an early date because of confusion over which *Zechariah* was meant. The meaning of the sentence is to indicate the sweep of time from the first to the last victim of murder mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Chronicles stands last in the order of books in the Hebrew Bible).

the son of Barachi'ah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.³⁸ Truly, I say to you, all this will come upon this generation.

37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!³⁸ Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate.^x ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

24 Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple.² But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down."

3 As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the close of the age?"⁴ And Jesus answered them, "Take heed that no one leads you astray.⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet.⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places:⁸ all this is but the beginning of the birthpangs.

9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and put you to death; and you will be

hated by all nations for my name's sake.¹⁰ And then many will fall away,^y and betray one another, and hate one another.¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray.¹² And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold.¹⁸ But he who endures to the end will be saved.¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come.

15 "So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;¹⁷ let him who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house;¹⁸ and let him who is in the field not turn back to take his mantle.¹⁹ And alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days!²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath.²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.²² And if those days had not been shortened, no human being would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.²³ Then if any one says to you, 'Lo, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it.²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.²⁵ Lo, I have told you beforehand.²⁶ So, if they say to you, 'Lo, he is in the wilderness,'

x Other ancient authorities omit *and desolate*

y Or *stumble*

23.37–39: Lament over Jerusalem (Lk.13.34–35). **37:** The words *how often* suggest repeated efforts, made perhaps during an earlier Judean ministry (see Lk.4.44 n.). **38:** 1 Kg.9.7; Jer.12.7; 22.5. **39:** 21.9; Ps.118.26.

24.1–3: Destruction of the temple foretold (Mk.13.1–2; Lk.21.5–7). **1:** These verses, together with the discourse that follows, seem to merge teachings about an immediate destruction of Jerusalem with details associated in Scripture with the end of human history. These teachings were set down by the Evangelist in the light of events between A.D. 30 and 70. It is difficult to be certain what the original form of Jesus' words was. **3:** Lk.17.20–21; Mt.13.39,40,49; 16.27.

24.4–36: On the end of the age (Mk.13.37; Lk.21.8–36). **5:** 1 Jn.2.18. **6–7:** Rev.6.3–8; 12–17. **8:** The birthpangs signal the imminence of the new age, which was announced at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry as "at hand" (4.17), but is to be realized only after a period of witness to Jesus' message (v. 14). Verses 5–14 seem to include a larger community of followers than the original disciples. **9:** 10.17–18,22; Jn.15.18; 16.2. **13:** 10.22; Rev.2.7. **14:** 28.19; Rom. 10.18. **15:** Dan.9.27; 11.31; 12.11; see Mk.13.14 n. **17–18:** Lk.17.31. **21:** Dan.12.1; Jl.2.2.

do not go out; if they say, 'Lo, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man.²⁸ Wherever the body is, there the eagles^z will be gathered together.

29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken;³⁰ then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory;³¹ and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates.³⁴ Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place.³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son,^a but the Father only.³⁷ As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man.³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,³⁹ and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man.⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left.⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at

the mill; one is taken and one is left.⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.⁴³ But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken into.⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

45 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time?⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing.⁴⁷ Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.⁴⁸ But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,'⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eats and drinks with the drunken,⁵⁰ the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know,⁵¹ and will punish^b him, and put him with the hypocrites; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.

25 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be compared to ten maidens who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.^c ² Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³ For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; ⁴ but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵ As the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶ But at midnight there was a cry, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷ Then all those maidens rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ And the foolish said to

z Or vultures *a* Other ancient authorities omit *nor the Son* *b* Or *cut him in pieces* *c* Other ancient authorities add *and the bride*

28: See Lk.17.37 n.; Job 39.30. 29–31: The language here is drawn from the Old Testament; God's victory over sin is to be established by the Son of man whom he sends (Rev.8.12; Is.13.10; 34.4; Ezek.32.7; Jl.2.10–11; Zeph.1.15). 30: 16.27; Dan.7.13; Rev.1.7. 31: 1 Cor.15.52; 1 Th.4.16; Is.27.13; Zech.2.10; 9.14. 34: 10.23; 16.28. The normal meaning of *this generation* would be "men of our time," and the words would refer to a period of 20–30 years. What Jesus meant, however, is uncertain. 35: 5.18; Lk.16.17. 36: Acts 1.6–7. 37–39: Lk.17.26–27; Gen.6.5–8; 7.6–24. 40–41: Lk.17.34–35. 42: Mk.13.35; Lk.12.40; 21.34–46; Mt.25.13. 43–51: Lk.12.39–46. 43: 1 Th.5.2; Rev.3.3.

25.1–46: Teachings on the coming of the kingdom. 1–13: The parable of the wise and foolish maidens is based on the Palestinian custom that the bridegroom fetched his bride from her parents' home to his own. 1: Lk.12.35–38; Mk.13.34. 2: 7.24–27. 10: Rev.19.9. 11–12: Lk.13.25; Mt.7.21–23. 13: 24.42; Mk.13.35; Lk.12.40.

the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹ But the wise replied, 'Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward the other maidens came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹² But he replied, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³ Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

14 'For it will be as when a man going on a journey called his servants and entrusted to them his property; ¹⁵ to one he gave five talents,^d to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶ He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them; and he made five talents more. ¹⁷ So also, he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸ But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹ Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' ²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little. I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' ²² And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' ²³ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to

be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow; ²⁵ so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶ But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not winnowed? ²⁷ Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸ So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰ And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'

31 "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? ³⁸ And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? ³⁹ And when did we

^d This talent was more than fifteen years' wages of a laborer

25.14–30: Parable of the talents. Lk.19.12–27. **15:** On the value of this *talent* see note *d*. **21:** Lk.16.10. **29:** The statement, *From him who has not . . . taken away*, illustrates Jesus' way of speaking in two settings at once: as the master's servant had his original talent, yet had earned nothing by it, so men can have their earthly existence and all that derives from it, yet lack merit in the final judgment (v. 30). **30:** *Worthless*, without value to his master.

25.31–46: The Great Judgment. **31:** 16.27; 19.28. **32:** Ezek.34.17. *The nations*, probably those who do not know the God of Israel (compare Rom.2.13–16). **34:** Lk.12.32; Mt.5.3; Rev.13.8; 17.8. **35–36:** Is.58.7; Jas.1.27; 2.15–16;

see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?"

⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.' ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?' ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' ⁴⁶ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

26 When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, ² "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of man will be delivered up to be crucified."

³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Ca'iaphas, ⁴ and took counsel together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. ⁵ But they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be a tumult among the people."

⁶ Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head, as he sat at table. ⁸ But when the disciples saw

it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? ⁹ For this ointment might have been sold for a large sum, and given to the poor."

¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. ¹¹ For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. ¹² In pouring this ointment on my body she has done it to prepare me for burial. ¹³ Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, "What will you give me if I deliver him to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.

¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the passover?" ¹⁸ He said, "Go into the city to a certain one, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at your house with my disciples.'" ¹⁹ And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the passover.

²⁰ When it was evening, he sat at table with the twelve disciples;^e ²¹ and as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." ²² And they were very sorrowful, and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" ²³ He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me, will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of man goes as it

e Other authorities omit *disciples*

Heb.13.2; 2 Tim.1.16. **40:** 10.42; Mk.9.41; Heb.6.10; Pr.19.17. **41:** Mk.9.48; Rev.20.10. **46:** Dan.12.2; Jn.5.29. *Go away into eternal life* expresses the same idea as *inherit the kingdom* (v. 34).

26.1–27.66: Jesus' death (Mk.14.1–15.47; Lk.22.1–23.56; Jn.13.1–19.42). **26.1:** *Finished*, see 7.28 n. **2–5:** Mk.14.1–2; Lk.22.1–2; Jn.11.47–53. **2:** *The Passover* commemorated the escape from Egypt under Moses (Ex.12.1–20). **6–13:** Mk.14.3–9; Jn.12.1–8. A similar event is reported in Lk.7.36–50. **6:** The identity of this Simon is unknown. **7:** Jn.12.3; see Lk.7.37 n., 46. **10:** *The beautiful thing* is what is good and fitting under the circumstances of impending death. The same Greek words are translated "good works" in 5.16. **12:** Jn.19.40. **14–16:** Mk.14.10–11; Lk.22.3–6. **14:** See Mk.14.10 n. **15:** Ex.21.32; Zech.11.12. The value of the *thirty pieces of silver* is uncertain. Matthew's quotation refers to silver shekels; at four denarii to the shekel this was one hundred and twenty days' wages (20.2).

26.17–29: The Last Supper. 17–19: Mk.14.12–16; Lk.22.7–13. **17:** See Lk.22.7 n. **18:** Lk.22.10 n., 11 n. Jn.7.6; 12.23; 13.1; 17.1. **19:** 21.6; Dt.16.5–8. **20–25:** Mk.14.17–21; Lk.22.14,21–23; Jn.13.21–30. **24:** Ps.41.9; Lk.24.25; 1

is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”²⁵ Judas, who betrayed him, said, “Is it I, Master?”^f He said to him, “You have said so.”

26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat, this is my body.”²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you;²⁸ for this is my blood of the^g covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.³¹ Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of me this night; for it is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’³² But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee.”³³ Peter declared to him, “Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away.”³⁴ Jesus said to him, “Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.”³⁵ Peter said to him, “Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you.” And so said all the disciples.

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go yonder and pray.”³⁷ And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zeb’edee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled.³⁸ Then he said to them, “My soul is

very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch^h with me.”³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”⁴⁰ And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch^h with me one hour?⁴¹ Watch^h and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”⁴² Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, thy will be done.”⁴³ And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.⁴⁴ So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words.⁴⁵ Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.⁴⁶ Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

47 While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, “The one I shall kiss is the man; seize him.”⁴⁹ And he came up to Jesus at once and said, “Hail, Master!”ⁱ And he kissed him.⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, “Friend, why are you here?”^j Then they came up and laid hands on Jesus and seized him.⁵¹ And behold, one of those

f Or *Rabbi* *g* Other ancient authorities insert *new*

h Or *keep awake* *i* Or *Rabbi* *j* Or *do that for which you have come*

Cor.15.3; Acts 17.2–3; Mt.18.7. **25:** Judas’ question is phrased to imply that the answer will be in the negative. **26–29:** Mk.14.22–25; Lk.22.15–20; 1 Cor.10.16; 11.23–26; Mt.14.19; 15.36; see Lk.22.17 n. **28:** Heb.9.20; Mt.20.28; Mk.1.4; Ex.24.6–8; see Mk.14.24 n. In the background of Jesus’ words are several important ideas of Jewish religion: man’s sins lead to death; God has rescued his people, as from Egypt, and may be trusted to deliver from death itself; God forgives men in mercy if they obey him; God will make a new covenant (Jer.31.31–34). **29:** See Lk.14.15; 22.18,30; Rev.19.9.

26.30–56: Gethsemane. 30–35: Mk.14.26–31; Lk.22.31–34,39; Jn.14.31; 18.1; 13.36–38. **30:** Probably the *hymn* was Psalms 115–118. **31:** Zech.13.7; Jn.16.32. **32:** 28.7,10,16. **36–46:** Mk.14.32–42; Lk.22.40–46. **38:** Jn.12.27; Heb.5.7–8; Ps.42.6. *My soul*, i.e. “I.” **39:** Ezek. 23.31–34; Jn.18.11; Mt.20.22. Jesus does not desire death but accepts God’s will even including death. *Cup*, see Lk.22.42 n. **41:** 6.13; Lk.11.4. *Temptation*, “testing,” in which man’s best intentions may give way. **42:** Jn.4.34; 5.30; 6.38. **45:** 26.18 n.; Jn.12.23; 13.1; 17.1. **47–56:** Mk.14.43–52; Lk.22.47–53; Jn.18.2–11. **50:** *Friend*, “comrade.” The synoptic gospels do not report Judas’ movements on this night

who were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest, and cut off his ear.⁵² Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."⁵³ Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?⁵⁴ But how then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"⁵⁵ At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, and you did not seize me."⁵⁶ But all this has taken place, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples forsook him and fled.

⁵⁷ Then those who had seized Jesus led him to Ca'iaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders had gathered.⁵⁸ But Peter followed him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and going inside he sat with the guards to see the end.⁵⁹ Now the chief priests and the whole council sought false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death,⁶⁰ but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward⁶¹ and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.'"⁶² And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?"⁶³ But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."⁶⁴ Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

⁶⁵ Then the high priest tore his robes, and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy."⁶⁶ What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death."⁶⁷ Then they spat in his face, and struck him; and some slapped him,⁶⁸ saying, "Prophecy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?"

⁶⁹ Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a maid came up to him, and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean."

⁷⁰ But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean."⁷¹ And when he went out to the porch, another maid saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth."⁷² And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man."⁷³ After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you."

⁷⁴ Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the cock crowed.⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the saying of Jesus, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

27 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death;² and they bound him and led him away and delivered him to Pilate the governor.

³ When Judas, his betrayer, saw that he was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priest and the elders,⁴ saying, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." They said, "What is that to us? See to it yourself."⁵ And throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged

(compare Jn.13.30; 18.3). **51:** Jn.18.10. **52:** Gen.9.6; Rev.13.10. **53:** *Twelve legions*, 72,000. **54:** Faith in God can not claim his promise (4.6) so as to counteract his purpose. **55:** Lk.19.47; Jn.18.19–21.

26.57–75: Jesus before Caiaphas. **57:** The reference is to the Jewish supreme court (the Sanhedrin; see Jn.11.47 n.). **59:** See Mk.14.55 n. **61:** 24.2; 27.40; Acts 6.14; Jn.2.19. **63:** 27.11; Jn.18.33. **64:** 16.28; Dan.7.13; Ps.110.1. **65:** Num.14.6; Acts 14.14; Lev.24.16. **66:** Lev.24.16. **73:** Peter spoke with a Galilean accent differing from the Judean. **75:** Compare v. 34.

27.1–26: Jesus before Pilate. **1–2:** Mk.15.1; Lk.23.1; Jn.18.28–32. Jewish law required that the Sanhedrin take formal action by daylight. Apparently 26.57–68 describes a pre-dawn hearing. **3–10:** Acts 1.16–20. The details of

himself. ⁶ But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since they are blood money." ⁷ So they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. ⁸ Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. ⁹ Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me."

11 Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, "You have said so." ¹² But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer. ¹³ Then Pilate said to him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" ¹⁴ But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge; so that the governor wondered greatly.

15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. ¹⁶ And they had then a notorious prisoner, called Barab'bas.^k ¹⁷ So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release for you, Barab'bas^k or Jesus who is called Christ?" ¹⁸ For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. ¹⁹ Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much over him today in a dream." ²⁰ Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the people to ask for Barab'bas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor again said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release for you?"

And they said, "Barab'bas." ²² Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Let him be crucified." ²³ And he said, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Let him be crucified."

24 So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, "I am innocent of this man's blood;^l see to it yourselves." ²⁵ And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!" ²⁶ Then he released for them Barab'bas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the praetorium, and they gathered the whole battalion before him. ²⁸ And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe upon him, ²⁹ and plaiting a crown of thorns they put it on his head, and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him they mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰ And they spat upon him, and took the reed and struck him on the head. ³¹ And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him.

32 As they went out, they came upon a man of Cyre'ne, Simon by name; this man they compelled to carry his cross. ³³ And when they came to a place called Gol'gotha (which means the place of a skull), ³⁴ they offered him wine to drink, mingled with gall; but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. ³⁵ And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting

k Other ancient authorities read *Jesus Barabbas*

l Other authorities read *this righteous blood* or *this righteous man's blood*

Judas' end are obscure. Each account connects him in death with a cemetery for foreigners in Jerusalem. 9-10: Zech.11.12-13; Jer.18.1-3; 32.6-15. 11-14: Mk.15.2-5; Lk.23.2-5; Jn.18.29-19.16. 14: Lk.23.9; Mt.26.62; Mk.14.60; 1 Tim.6.13. 15-26: Mk.15.6-15; Lk.23.18-25; Jn.18.38-40; 19.4-16. 19: Lk.23.4. 21: Acts 3.13-14. 24: Dt.21.6-9; Ps.26.6. 25: Acts 5.28; Jos.2.19. 26: Scouring with a multi-thonged whip ordinarily preceded execution. 27-27-44: The crucifixion. 27-31: Mk.15.16-20; Jn.19.1-3. 27: The praetorium was the governor's residence.

The battalion at full strength numbered about five hundred men. 32-44: Mk.15.21-32; Lk.23.26,33-43; Jn.19.17-24. 32: The procession included Jesus, two other prisoners, a centurion, and a few soldiers. Simon, see Mk.15.21 n. 34: Gall, any bitter liquid, possibly the myrrh of Mk.15.23. 35: Ps.22.18. 37: Indication of the offense was customary.

lots; ³⁶ then they sat down and kept watch over him there. ³⁷ And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." ³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. ³⁹ And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." ⁴¹ So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, ⁴² "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. ⁴³ He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him; for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" ⁴⁴ And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land^m until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?" that is, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ And some of the bystanders hearing it said, "This man is calling Eli'jah." ⁴⁸ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Eli'jah will come to save him."ⁿ ⁵⁰ And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

⁵¹ And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; ⁵² the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of

the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, ⁵³ and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴ When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe, and said, "Truly this was the Son^x of God!"

⁵⁵ There were also many women there, looking on from afar, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him; ⁵⁶ among whom were Mary Mag'dalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zeb'edee.

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. ⁵⁹ And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud, ⁶⁰ and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed. ⁶¹ Mary Mag'dalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the sepulchre.

⁶² Next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³ and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' ⁶⁴ Therefore order the sepulchre to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away, and tell the

m Or earth *n* Other ancient authorities insert *And another took a spear and pierced his side, and out came water and blood* *x* Or a son

Since the Romans recognized the ruling Herods, it seems implied that Jesus was alleged to be a pretender and revolutionary. **39:** Ps.22.7-8; 109.25. **40:** 26.61; Acts 6.14; Jn.2.19. **42-43:** The taunts stress religious aspects of Jesus' works and words. *Israel* (rather than *the Jews*, v. 37) refers to the religious community rather than the political state. **43:** Ps.22.8.

27.45-66: The death of Jesus. 45-56: Mk.15.33-41; Lk.23.44-49; Jn.19.28-37. **45:** From about noon to about three p.m. **46:** *Eli . . . sabachthani*, quoted from Ps.22.1. **47:** *Elijah* (similar in sound to *Eli*) was expected to usher in the final period (Mal.4.5-6; Mt.27.49). **48:** Ps.69.21. The *vinegar* was a cheap, sour wine of the poor. The motive in offering it may have been to revive him and hence prolong the ordeal. **51:** Heb.9.8; 10.19; Ex.26.31-35; Mt.28.2; see Mk.15.38 n. **56:** *James*, possibly the James of 10.3; Lk.24.10; Acts 1.13. **57-61:** Mk.15.42-47; Lk.23.50-56; Jn.19.38-42; Acts 13.29. **58:** Bodies of the executed were normally denied burial. **60:** See Mk.16.3-5 n.; Acts 13.29. **61:** 27.56. **62:** *Next day*, the sabbath (Mk.15.42).

people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first."

⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard^o of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can."^p

⁶⁶ So they went and made the sepulchre secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

28 Now after the sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Mag'dalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. ³ His appearance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. ⁴ And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid; for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he^q lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. Lo, I have told you." ⁸ So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹ And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Hail!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do

not be afraid; go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

¹¹ While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. ¹² And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sum of money to the soldiers ¹³ and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were directed; and this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."

o Or *Take a guard* *p* Greek *know*

q Other ancient authorities read *the Lord*

28.1–15: The first Easter (Mk.16.1–8; Lk.24.1–11; Jn.20.1–10). **4:** *The guards*, 27.62–66. **7:** 26.32; 28.16; Jn.21.1–23; 1 Cor.15.3–4,12,20. **8:** Compare Lk.24.9,22–23; the sequence of events cannot be worked out. Each account is a separate summary of early Christian testimony to the fact of Jesus' resurrection. **9:** Jn.20.14–18.

28.11–15: Bribing the guard. **11:** 27.62–66. **15:** *This day*, i.e. the time when the Gospel according to Matthew was written.

28.16–20: Jesus' commission to his disciples. **17:** 1 Cor.15.5–6; Jn.21.1–23; Lk.24.11. **18:** 11.27; Lk.10.22; Phil.2.9; Eph.1.20–22. *All authority*, compare Dan.7.14. **19:** *All nations*, contrast 10.5, and compare Mk.16.15; Lk.24.47; Acts 1.8. According to Hebrew usage *in the name of* means in the possession and protection of (Ps.124.8). **20:** *I am with you*, 18.20; Acts 18.10.

Reading 9

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

The Fourth Gospel explains the mystery of the person of Jesus. Like other men, he is yet unlike them, standing above them in unique, solitary grandeur. Whence this uniqueness? The Synoptic Gospels present it, but do not account for it. John takes us behind the scenes of Jesus' earthly ministry, letting us see the eternal origin and divine nature of this Man who was more than man. He was eternally present with God, active in creating the world, the source of the moral and spiritual nature ("life," "light") of man. Hence, when he became Man, he "made . . . known" the eternal God, whom "no one has ever seen" (1.14,18).

As do the other Evangelists, John records real events, but goes beyond them in interpreting these events. He uses symbols from common experience — such as bread, water, light, life, shepherd, door — and contrasting images from the thought-world of the time — such as light/darkness, truth/lies, love/hatred — to make the meaning of Christ clear and gripping. After a magnificent prologue (1.1–18) he sets forth Jesus Christ as the object of faith (1.19–4.54), depicts his conflict with unbelievers (chs. 5–12), his fellowship with believers (chs. 13–17), his death and resurrection (chs. 18–20), and concludes with an epilogue (ch. 21).

Who is the author? Tradition says it was the apostle John. Many scholars, however, suggest a disciple of John who recorded his preaching as Mark did that of Peter. In any case, the historic basis of the Gospel has become increasingly recognized. When it appeared, whether around A.D. 90–100 or much earlier as some now hold, it was accepted as an authentic and apostolic testimony to Jesus (21.24), written that men might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and thus "have life in his name" (20.31).

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God; ³ all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴ In him was life,^a and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. ¹¹ He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. ¹⁵ (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") ¹⁶ And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever

seen God; the only Son,^b who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known.

¹⁹ And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed, he did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." ²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Eli'jah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered, "No." ²² They said to him then, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Eli'jah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" ³⁰ This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before

a Or was not anything made. That which has been made was life in him *b* Other ancient authorities read God

1.1–18: The Prologue. **1–2:** The *Word* (Greek "logos") of God is more than speech; it is God in action, creating (Gen.1.3; Ps.33.6), revealing (Amos 3.7–8), redeeming (Ps.107.19–20). Jesus is this *Word* (v. 14). He was eternal (*in the beginning*: compare Gen.1.1); personal (*with God*); divine (*was God*). *Was*, not "became" (contrast v. 14). **3:** He was sole agent of creation (Gen. 1.1; Pr.8.27–30; Col.1.16–17; Heb.1.2). **4:** Apart from him both physical (Col.1.17) and spiritual life would recede into nothingness (5.39–40; 8.12). **5:** *Darkness* is total evil in conflict with God; it cannot overcome. **6–8:** John, climaxing the Old Testament prophets, was *sent* (commissioned by God, Mal.3.1) to point to Jesus (vv. 19–34). **9:** *True light* is real, underived light, contrasted not with false light, but with such as John, who was but a lamp (5.35). **11:** *His own people*, the Jews. **14–17:** God's *glory* dwelt ("tabernacled") in the *flesh* (human nature) of Jesus, as did his *grace* (redeeming love) and *truth* (faithfulness to his promises). These are available to *all*, exhaustless (*grace upon grace*), a fulfilment of the *law of Moses*. **18:** *The bosom of the Father*; complete communion (vv. 1–2). *Men see God* in Jesus (14.9).

1.19–34: The testimony of John. **19:** *Jews*, the religious authorities. **20:** *The Christ*, the Messiah. **21:** *Elijah* (2 Kg.2.11) was expected to return to prepare the Messiah's way (Mal.4.5). John is unconscious of this role, but Jesus later ascribed it to him (see Mt.11.14 n.; Mk.9.13 n.). *The prophet* was likewise an expected Messianic forerunner (6.14; 7.40; see Dt.18.15). **23:** As a *voice* John fulfils a prophetic role announcing the Messiah's coming (Is.40.3). **25:** *Why are you baptizing*, performing an official rite, without official status? **27:** *To untie a sandal thong* was a slave's task. **29:** *Lamb*, Ex. ch. 12; Is.53.7. *Of God*, provided by God. **30:** He outranks me, *for he was* (existed) *before me*.

me.’³¹ I myself did not know him; but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.”³² And John bore witness, “I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven, and it remained on him.”³³ I myself did not know him; but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’³⁴ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples;³⁶ and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.³⁸ Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, “What do you seek?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”³⁹ He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ).⁴² He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, “So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter^c).

43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. And he found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsa’ida, the city of Andrew and Peter.⁴⁵ Philip found Nathan’a-el, and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also

the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”⁴⁶ Nathan’a-el said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathan’a-el coming to him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!”⁴⁸ Nathan’a-el said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”⁴⁹ Nathan’a-el answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You shall see greater things than these.”⁵¹ And he said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

2 On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there;² Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples.³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.”⁴ And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.”⁵ His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”⁶ Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.⁷ Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.⁸ He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.” So they took it.⁹ When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine,

^c From the word for *rock* in Aramaic and Greek respectively

31–33: John’s knowledge of Jesus’ significance was given him by God at the baptism. **34:** *Son of God*, the Messiah (v. 49; 11.27).

1.35–51: The testimony of Jesus’ first disciples. **39:** *Come and see*, a call to personal following (8.12). *The tenth hour*, about 4 p.m. **42:** In Aramaic *Cephas* (Greek *Peter*) means *Rock*. **45:** *Moses . . . prophets*, the Old Testament points to Christ. **46:** *Nathanael*, probably the same person as Bartholomew (Mt.10.3; Mk.3.18; Lk.6.14), lived in Cana, near Nazareth (21.2). **47:** *No guile*, no qualities of Jacob before he became Israel (Gen.27.35; 32.28). **51:** What Jacob saw in vision (Gen.28.12) is now a reality in Jesus. *Son of man*, a messenger from heaven to make God known (3.13), and to be the final judge (5.27; see Mk.2.10 n.).

2.1–12: The wedding at Cana. **4:** *Woman*, a term of solemn and respectful address (compare 19.26). *The hour* of Jesus’ self-disclosure was determined by God, not by Mary’s desires. His final manifestation was at the cross (7.30; 8.20; 12.23,27; 13.1; 17.1). **6:** *Rites of purification* were ceremonial, not hygienic. **8:** *Steward*, head-waiter or toast-

and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom¹⁰ and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."¹¹ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

12 After this he went down to Caper'nam, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days.

13 The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.¹⁴ In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business.¹⁵ And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple; and he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.¹⁶ And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade."¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for thy house will consume me."¹⁸ The Jews then said to him, "What sign have you to show us for doing this?"¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."²⁰ The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?"²¹ But he spoke of the temple of his body.²² When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did;²⁴ but Jesus did not trust himself to them,²⁵ because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man.

3 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicode'mus, a ruler of the Jews.² This man came to Jesus^d by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him."³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew,^e he cannot see the kingdom of God."⁴ Nicode'mus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.^f Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.'^e The wind^f blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit."⁹ Nicode'mus said to him, "How can this be?"¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this?"¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you do not receive our testimony.¹² If I have told you earthly things

d Greek him *e* Or from above *f* The same Greek word means both wind and spirit

master. 11: Jesus' miracles were not wonders to astound, but *signs* pointing to *his glory* (God's presence in him). *First*, for the second see 4.46–54. 12: *Brothers*, see Mt.13.55 n.

2.13–25: **The cleansing of the temple** (compare Mt.21.12–17; Mk.11.15–19; Lk.19.45–48). 14: Animals were sold for sacrifice; Roman money was changed into Jewish money to pay the temple tax. 15–16: Not an outburst of temper, but the energy of righteousness against religious leaders to whom religion had become a business. *My Father's house* is a claim to lordship. 17: Ps.69.9. 23–25: Faith which rests merely on *signs* and not on him to whom they point is shallow and unstable.

3.1–21: **Jesus and official Judaism.** 1: *The Pharisees* were the most devout of Jews. *A ruler*, a member of the Sanhedrin (see 11.47 n.). 3: *The kingdom of God* is entered, not by moral achievement, but by a transformation wrought by God. 5: Birth into the new order is through *water* (referring to baptism; 1.33; Eph.5.26) and *the Spirit* (Ezek.36.25–27; Tit.3.5). 6: Like begets like. 8–9: See note *f* and Ezek.37.5–10. 12: *Earthly things*, such as the para-

and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man.^g ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”^h

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For every one who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be clearly seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.

²² After this Jesus and his disciples went into the land of Judea; there he remained with them and baptized. ²³ John also was baptizing at Ae’non near Salim, because there was much water there; and people came and were baptized. ²⁴ For John had not yet been put in prison.

²⁵ Now a discussion arose between John’s disciples and a Jew over purifying. ²⁶ And they came to John, and said to him, “Rabbi, he who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you bore witness, here he is, baptizing,

and all are going to him,” ²⁷ John answered, “No one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him. ²⁹ He who has the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice; therefore this joy of mine is now full. ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.”ⁱ

³¹ He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; he who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony; ³³ he who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. ³⁴ For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for it is not by measure that he gives the Spirit; ³⁵ the Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand. ³⁶ He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him.

4 Now when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), ³ he left Judea and departed again to Galilee. ⁴ He had to pass through Sama’ria. ⁵ So he came to a city of Sama’ria, called Sy’char, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there, and so Jesus, wearied as he was with his journey,

^g Other ancient authorities add *who is in heaven*

^h Some interpreters hold that the quotation continues through verse 21 ⁱ Some interpreters hold that the quotation continues through verse 36

ble of the wind; *heavenly things*, supreme spiritual realities. **13–15:** Jesus *descended from heaven* to bring *eternal life* (participation in God’s life), through being *lifted up* on the cross (Num.21.9). **16:** Luther called this verse “the Gospel in miniature.” **17–20:** God’s purpose is to save; men judge themselves by hiding their *evil deeds* from the *light* of Christ’s holiness.

3.22–36: Further testimony of John (compare 1.19–34). **25:** *Purifying*, Jewish religious ceremonies. **27–29:** John was only the *friend of the bridegroom*, leading Israel, the bride, to Jesus, the bridegroom. He *rejoices* in their union (see Mk.2.19–20 n.). **32–35:** *No one*, a generalization about the Jews. The author and others do believe, and attest that Jesus authentically speaks *the words of God*. **36:** Unbelief is disobedience. *Wrath* is the consuming fire of God’s holiness.

4.1–42: Jesus and the Samaritans. 1–3: *The Pharisees*, hostile to John, now turn on Jesus. **4:** *Samaria*, between Judea and Galilee, with a mixed people (see Acts 8.5 n.). **5:** Gen.33.19; 48.22; Jos.24.32. **6:** *Wearied*, shows Jesus’

sat down beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 There came a woman of Sama'ria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."⁸ For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Sama'ria?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."¹¹ The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where do you get that living water?"¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, and his sons, and his cattle?"¹³ Jesus said to her, "Every one who drinks of this water will thirst again,¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband; this you said truly."¹⁹ The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet."²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father."²² You wor-

ship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him.²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things."

²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

27 Just then his disciples came. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but none said, "What do you wish?" or, "Why are you talking with her?"²⁸ So the woman left her water jar, and went away into the city, and said to the people,²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?"³⁰ They went out of the city and were coming to him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples besought him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."³² But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

³³ So the disciples said to one another, "Has any one brought him food?"³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work."³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest.³⁶ He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.³⁷ For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.'³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

39 Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testi-

humanity. *The sixth hour*, about noon. 5: Gen. 33.19; 48.22; Jos. 24.32. 9: Rabbis avoided speaking to a woman in public (v. 27). Jews held Samaritans in contempt, as religious apostates (2 Kg. 17.24–34). 10: *Living water*, Jer. 2.13; 17.13. 14: Jesus' gift is God's life in man. 19–20: A prophet should be able to settle rival religious claims. 21: *This mountain*, i.e. Mount Gerizim, where the Samaritans had had a temple. Jesus means that the place of worship is not of primary importance. 24: Worship in spirit is man's response to God's gift of himself (*the Father seeks*, v. 23). In truth, in accord with God's nature seen in Christ. 27: See v. 9 n. 35: *Already*, see v. 30. 36: *Wages*, the reward of gathering believers. 37–38: Jesus sows (vv. 7–26), the disciples reap; the harvest comes from the labor of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (12.23–24). 39–42: Faith based on the testimony of another (*the woman*) is vindicated in personal experience.

mony, "He told me all that I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of his word. ⁴² They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world."

⁴³ After the two days he departed to Galilee. ⁴⁴ For Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. ⁴⁵ So when he came to Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast, for they too had gone to the feast.

⁴⁶ So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. ⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ Jesus therefore said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹ The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way. ⁵¹ As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was living. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to mend, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." ⁵³ The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live"; and he himself believed, and all his household. ⁵⁴ This was now the second sign that Jesus did when he had come from Judea to Galilee.

5 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

² Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Hebrew called Beth-zatha,^j which has five porticoes. ³ In these lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed.^k ⁵ One man was there, who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" ⁷ The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." ⁸ Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." ⁹ And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked.

Now that day was the sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, it is not lawful for you to carry your pallet." ¹¹ But he answered them, "The man who healed me said to me; 'Take up your pallet, and walk.'" ¹² They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your pallet, and walk'?" ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place. ¹⁴ Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse befall you." ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him. ¹⁶ And this was why the Jews persecuted Jesus, because he did

^j Other ancient authorities read *Bethesda*, others *Bethsaida* ^k Other ancient authorities insert, wholly or in part, *waiting for the moving of the water*; ⁴ *for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and troubled the water; whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the water was healed of whatever disease he had*

4.43–54: Jesus and the Gentiles. Illustrates v. 42, Jesus as *Savior of the world* (Jew, Samaritan, Gentile — everyone; compare Is.43.3,11; 45.22). **46:** *An official*, a Gentile military officer. **48:** *You* is plural here, addressed to all who base faith on mere signs (compare v. 45). **49:** He desires life for his child, not a display. **50:** The official *believed* that Jesus' word had effected the cure, and he did not return to his home (which was only about eighteen miles away) until the next day (v. 52). **52:** *Seventh hour*, about 1 p.m. **53:** *Believed*, in the deepest sense. **54:** *Second*, for the first see 2.1–11.

5.1–18: Healing the lame man on the sabbath. **3:** After the word *paralyzed* later manuscripts add an explanatory statement; see note *k*. **7:** *When the water is troubled* is explained by the addition to v. 3. Movement caused by an intermittent spring was attributed to divine action. **13:** *Jesus had withdrawn* to avoid publicity. **14:** There are *worse* things

this on the sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working still, and I am working." ¹⁸ This was why the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows him all that he himself is doing; and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel. ²¹ For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. ²² The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. ²⁴ Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

²⁵ "Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself, ²⁷ and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment.

³⁰ "I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³¹ If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is not true; ³² there is another who bears witness to me, and I know that the testimony which he bears to me is true. ³³ You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. ³⁴ Not that the testimony which I receive is from man; but I say this that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. ³⁶ But the testimony which I have is greater than that of John; for the works which the Father has granted me to accomplish, these very works which I am doing, bear me witness that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness to me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen; ³⁸ and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe him whom he has sent. ³⁹ You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men. ⁴² But I know that you have not the love of God within you. ⁴³ I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. ⁴⁴ How can you believe, who receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? ⁴⁵ Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; it is Moses who accuses you, on whom you set your hope. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you

than illness. **16:** *The Jews*, the religious authorities, opposed Jesus for his break with their legalism. **17:** God continually gives life and judges evil, as does Jesus. **18:** *Equal*, see 10.30–33.

5.19–29: Jesus' relation to God. 19–20: Jesus' sonship involves the identity of his will and actions with the Father's. The *greater works* are giving life (v. 21) and judgment (v. 22). **24:** He who *believes* on the basis of Jesus' word *has passed* into the realm where death does not reign. **25:** The *coming* age is already present in Jesus. To *hear* with the comprehension of faith makes the spiritually *dead* live. **26–29:** They will share in the final *resurrection of life*.

5.30–40: Evidence of Jesus' relation to God. 30: Jesus' judgment is that of God, and therefore *just*, without favoritism or error. **32:** *Another*, the Father. **33–40:** God witnesses to Jesus through the ministry of *John* the Baptist (vv. 33–35), through Jesus' *works* (v. 36), and through *the scriptures* (vv. 37–40).

5.41–47: Jesus condemns the Jews. 41: No human standards apply to him. **42:** No *love of God*, no love of Jesus. **43–44:** Judgment based on human pride. **45:** 9.28; Rom.2.17. **47:** Lk.16.29,31.

would believe me, for he wrote of me.⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tibe'ri-as.² And a multitude followed him, because they saw the signs which he did on those who were diseased.³ Jesus went up on the mountain, and there sat down with his disciples.⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.⁵ Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to him, Jesus said to Philip, "How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?"⁶ This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do.⁷ Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii^l would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little."⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him,⁹ "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what are they among so many?"¹⁰ Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand.¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.¹² And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost."¹³ So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten.¹⁴ When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!"

15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him

king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea,¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to Caper'na-um. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.¹⁸ The sea rose because a strong wind was blowing.¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles,^m they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat. They were frightened,²⁰ but he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."²¹ Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

22 On the next day the people who remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.²³ However, boats from Tibe'ri-as came near the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks.²⁴ So when the people saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Caper'na-um, seeking Jesus.

25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?"²⁶ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."²⁷ Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal."²⁸ Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of

l The denarius was a day's wage for a laborer

m Greek *twenty-five or thirty stadia*

6.1–15: Feeding the five thousand; the only miracle recorded by all four gospels (Mt.14.13–21; Mk.6.32–44; Lk.9.10–17). **1:** *Tiberias*, named for the Emperor Tiberius. **6:** *To test Philip's faith.* **7:** *Two hundred denarii*, for the value of the denarius, see note *l*. **9:** *Barley loaves*, food of the poor. **12:** *Gather*, an act of reverential economy toward the gift of God. **13:** *Twelve baskets*, one for each disciple. **15:** *To make him king*, as a political Messiah opposing Rome; but Jesus would not accept this (18.36).

6.16–21: Jesus walks on the sea (Mt.14.22–27; Mk.6.45–51). Jesus is greater than a political ruler (v. 15); he is Lord of the elements (Ps.107.29–30). **17:** *Not yet come*, probably they expected to meet Jesus along the shore. **20–21:** Jesus' presence dispels fear.

6.22–71: Jesus, the bread of life. 22–25: Note the clamor for more bread. **26:** *Signs*, pointing to Jesus as food for the soul. **27:** *Son of man*, see 1.51 n. *Seal*, God's authentication, perhaps at the baptism (1.32). **28:** *Works*, 3.21;

God?" ²⁹ Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰ So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?" ³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³² Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world." ³⁴ They said to him, "Lord, give us this bread always."

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; ³⁹ and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

⁴¹ The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." ⁴² They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" ⁴³ Jesus answered them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the

Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. ⁴⁶ Not that any one has seen the Father except him who is from God; he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; ⁵⁴ he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever." ⁵⁹ This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caper'na-um.

⁶⁰ Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" ⁶¹ But Jesus, knowing in himself that

Rev.2.26. **29:** *Work*, singular number; not many works (v. 28), but obedient trust (*believe*) is the one thing pleasing to God (1 Jn.3.23). *Him . . . sent*, Jesus who reveals God. **30:** *See*, as a proof; but faith cannot be proved. **31:** The Messiah was expected to reproduce the miracle of the giving of manna (Ex.16.4,15; Num.11.8; Ps.78.24; 105.40). **36-40:** Jesus himself is God's gift of sustenance for time and eternity. Belief, or unbelief involves a mystery known only to God, but no one who *comes* is rejected (v. 37). Faith is God's gift, not a human achievement; it gives *eternal life* now and issues in resurrection *at the last day*. **44-45:** The *drawing* is not coercive or mechanical. *Prophets*, Is.54.13; compare Jl.2.28-29. Had they *heard* and *learned* God's voice in their scriptures, they would have recognized its accents in him who alone has direct communion with God. **51:** *The living bread . . . is my flesh*, the One who became flesh (assumed complete human nature, 1.14) offered himself to God in death, thus releasing his life *for the life of the world*. **53:** The separation of the *blood* from the *flesh* emphasizes the reality of Jesus' death. **54:** To *eat* and *drink* is to believe (v. 47), to appropriate, assimilate, and *abide* in Christ (v. 56). **58:** Since Christ is *bread . . . from heaven* (compare vv. 32-35), to eat him is to *live for ever*. **60:** *Hard saying* means offensive or difficult, but not obscure. **62-63:** The ascen-

his disciples murmured at it, said to them, "Do you take offense at this?" ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you that do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him. ⁶⁷ Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also wish to go away?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; ⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was to betray him.

sion, by which Jesus will be taken away as regards the flesh, will indicate that he has been speaking of spiritual realities and not the actual eating of his flesh. **64-65:** These truths can be discerned only by faith, which is God's gift, not man's achievement (Eph. 2.8). **66-71:** To receive God's gift of faith is to *know* God in Christ; to refuse it is to become an ally of the *devil*. Faith and unbelief mark the great divisions among men.

Reading 10

ROMANS

3 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? ² Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ By no means! Let God be true though every man be false, as it is written,

“That thou mayest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged.”

⁵ But if our wickedness serves to show the justice of God, what shall we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) ⁶ By no means! For then how could God judge the world? ⁷ But if through my falsehood God’s truthfulness abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? ⁸ And why not do evil that good may come? — as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just.

⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off?^c No, not at all; for I^d have already charged that all men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, ¹⁰ as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;
¹¹ no one understands, no one seeks for God.

¹² All have turned aside, together they have gone wrong;

no one does good, not even one.”

¹³ “Their throat is an open grave,
they use their tongues to deceive.”

“The venom of asps is under their lips.”

¹⁴ “Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”

¹⁵ “Their feet are swift to shed blood,
¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery,

¹⁷ and the way of peace they do not know.”

¹⁸ “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.

²⁰ For no human being will be justified in his sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

c Or at any disadvantage? d Greek we

3.1–8: The advantage of the Jews as the covenant people cannot be denied. To them were given the *oracles*, i.e. the Scriptures, and particularly the promises they contain. God’s *faithfulness* in making the promises is not invalidated by the failure of the Jews to keep their part of the covenant; nor can that failure be excused on the plea that, because of it, God’s truth will shine more brightly when he fulfils his part (Paul will discuss this problem more fully in chs. 9–11). **4:** Ps.51.4.

3.9–20: All are guilty. Jew and Greek, despite the former’s advantages, stand on the same ground, *under the power of sin*. **10–18:** Ps.14.1–2; 53.1–2; 5.9; 140.3; 10.7; Is.59.7–8; Ps.36.1. The law succeeds only in making men aware of their condition. That indeed was God’s purpose in giving it (7.7; see Gal.3.19–29 n.).

21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; ²³ since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins; ²⁶ it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has faith in Jesus.

27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On the principle of works? No, but on the principle of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised through their faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

4 What then shall we say about^e Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to one who works, his

wages are not reckoned as a gift but as his due.

⁵ And to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness. ⁶ So also David pronounces a blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

⁷ "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;

⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin."

⁹ Is this blessing pronounced only upon the circumcised, or also upon the uncircumcised? We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹ He received circumcision as a sign or seal of the righteousness which he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, ¹² and likewise the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but also follow the example of the faith which our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

¹³ The promise to Abraham and his descendants, that they should inherit the world, did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null

^e Other ancient authorities read *was gained by*

3.21–26: The true righteousness, now revealed in Christ, rests not upon obedience to law, but on faith in God's act of redemption . . . in Christ Jesus. **21:** *The law and the prophets*, the Hebrew scriptures. **24:** *Redemption* means a ransoming or "buying back" (as of a slave or captive), and therefore emancipation or deliverance. Slaves of sin are set free through God's act in Christ (Eph.1.7; Col.1.14; Heb.9.15). **25:** *Expiation by his blood*, a reference to the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin (1 Jn.2.2), demonstrating the seriousness with which God regards sin (despite his *forbearance*); it also reveals the measure of his love (Jn.3.16).

3.27–31: Boasting is excluded. *On the principle of works* there might be ground for boasting, but if salvation is by faith, pride is excluded. **30:** Since God is one, he will deal with Jews and Gentiles on the same basis.

4.1–8: Abraham justified by faith, not by works. **2:** *But not before God*; the full statement would be: "But actually if he had anything to boast about, it was not before God." **3:** According to Paul's understanding of Gen.15.6, Abraham's faith in God was credited to him as righteousness. **6–8:** God's blessing belongs not to those who perfectly obey the law (as though that were possible), but to those who in faith accept God's free gift of forgiveness (Ps.32.1–2). **9–12:** This justification of Abraham occurred *before he was circumcised*, and therefore cannot have been dependent upon circumcision; it depended only upon faith. **11:** Gen.17.10. **12:** *Follow the example*, i.e. rely only on faith, as Abraham did.

and the promise is void.¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants — not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham, for he is the father of us all,¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations” — in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations; as he had been told, “So shall your descendants be.”¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead because he was about a hundred years old, or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.²² That is why his faith was “reckoned to him as righteousness.”²³ But the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him that raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,²⁵ who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we^f have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.² Through him we have obtained access^g to this grace in which we stand, and we^h rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory

of God.³ More than that, we^h rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,⁵ and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

6 While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.⁷ Why, one will hardly die for a righteous man — though perhaps for a good man one will dare even to die.⁸ But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.⁹ Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.¹¹ Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation.

12 Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned —¹³ sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.

15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man’s trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free

f Other ancient authorities read *let us* *g* Other ancient authorities add *by faith* *h* Or *let us*

4.13–25: The true descendants of Abraham are those who have faith in Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles. To them the benefits promised to Abraham belong (Gen.17.4–6; 22.17–18; Gal.3.29). **17:** Gen.17.5. **18:** Gen.15.5. **19:** Gen.17.17; 18.11; Heb.11.12. **22–23:** See v. 3.

5.1–11: Consequences of justification. 1–5: When we rely utterly upon God’s grace and not at all upon ourselves, *we have peace*, i.e. reconciliation, or a state of harmony *with God. Hope of . . . the glory of God*, though we had fallen short of the glorious destiny God intended for us (3.23), we now find ourselves confidently expecting it. **6–11:** Christ in his death has borne the consequences of our sin and thus has reconciled us to God. Note that Paul never speaks of a reconciliation of God to us; it is we who were estranged. **9–10:** Being *now justified* (and reconciled) *by Christ’s death, we shall . . . be saved in the final Judgment by his life*, i.e. through our participation in his present *life* as the risen Lord. **11:** *Now*, under the gospel.

5.12–21: Adam and Christ; analogy and contrast. Sin and death for all men followed upon Adam’s disobedi-

gift in the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the effect of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brings justification.¹⁷ If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

18 Then as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one man's act of righteousness leads to acquittal and life for all men.¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.²⁰ Law came in, to increase the trespass; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For he

who has died is freed from sin.⁸ But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.⁹ For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.¹⁰ The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.¹³ Do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God as men who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments of righteousness.¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

15 What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.

20 When you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.²¹ But then

ence (Gen.2.17; 3.17–19). **13–16:** 1 Cor.15.21–23,45–49. **18:** *Acquittal and life for all* followed upon Christ's perfect obedience. **20:** *Law . . . to increase the trespass*, this is explained in 7.7–13.

6.1–14: Dying and rising with Christ. Paul's insistence that salvation is entirely a gracious and undeserved gift of God may seem to have laid him open to the charge of encouraging sin. This charge Paul vigorously rejects. When the Christian is *baptized*, he is united with Christ. We share in his death and in the *newness of life* (v. 4), which his resurrection has made possible for us. But this death is a *death . . . to sin*, and the new life is *life . . . to God* (v. 10). *How then can we who died to sin still live in it?* (v. 2). **6:** *The sinful body*, not the physical body as such, but the sinful self. **13:** *Your members*, all the organs and functions of the person.

6.15–23: The two slaveries. In rejecting again the same charge (see v. 1 n.), Paul draws an analogy from slavery. The sinner is sin's slave; but if he becomes God's slave, how can he longer obey his old master? **19:** *Sanctification*, the process and result of being entirely devoted, consecrated, to God (v. 22).

what return did you get from the things of which you are now ashamed? The end of those things is death.²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life.²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

7 Do you not know, brethren — for I am speaking to those who know the law — that the law is binding on a person only during his life? ² Thus a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies she is discharged from the law concerning the husband. ³ Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

4 Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I should not have known sin. I should not have known what it is to covet if the law

had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, wrought in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead. ⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died; ¹⁰ the very commandment which promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, finding opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and by it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ So then it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin which dwells within me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, ²³ but I see in my members another law at war

7.1–6: An analogy from marriage. One who has died to sin is no more bound to it than is a woman to her deceased husband. **1–2:** *The law* here probably means Roman law. **4–6:** *The law* here refers to God’s commandments, as in chs. 2–4.

7.7–13: The law and sin. **7:** Though the law is *holy . . . and good* (v. 12), it not only makes man conscious of sin (see Gal.3.19 n.), but also incites to sin (e.g. covetousness; compare Ex.20.17; Dt.5.21). **9:** Probably a reminiscence of a thoughtless, carefree boyhood brought to an end (*death*) by the dawning sense of moral obligation and guilt. **10:** Lev.18.5. **13:** The real enemy is sin, which uses even *what is good* (the law) to make a man more sinful than he would otherwise be.

7.14–23: The inner conflict. Sin is personified as an evil power that enters a man’s life and brings his true self into slavery to its rule or *law* (still another use of this term). **14:** *The law is spiritual*, divine in origin and nature, and holy (v. 12). *I am carnal*, Greek “fleshly,” referring not merely to man’s physical nature, but to his whole nature in so far as he is ruled by selfish interests (compare v. 18 and v. 25). **17:** In emphasizing the reality of sin’s power over a man’s *inmost self* (v. 22), Paul seems almost to deny one’s responsibility for sin (compare v. 20). Other passages in his letters, however, prevent our inferring that he means this (e.g. Rom.1.31–2.5).

with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I of myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

8 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin,ⁱ he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot; ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh, you are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ

is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you.

¹² So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — ¹³ for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God; ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of him who subjected it in hope; ²¹ because the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the

i Or and as a sin offering

7.24–25: Despair and release. Threatened by utter defeat in the struggle with our enemy entrenched in our own souls, we cast ourselves upon God's mercy in Christ; only then do we find freedom from both the guilt and the power of sin. **24:** *This body of death*, i.e. the body, which is the instrument of sin, is under the dominion of death. **25:** *Flesh*, compare "carnal," v. 14 n.

8.1–4: God's saving act. 1: *Condemnation* means more than judgment; it means doom. There is to be no doom or death for us, because God has sentenced sin to death (*condemned sin*, v. 3). **2:** *The Spirit* is the divine principle (*law*) of life in the new order which God has created through Christ. To be *in Christ* is to belong to this new order and thus to know the Spirit, who is the actual presence of God in our midst and in our hearts. **4:** Only through the power of *the Spirit* can we hope for the righteousness which *the law* requires but cannot enable us in our weakness to attain.

8.5–11: Life in the flesh and in the Spirit. 5: To live *according to the flesh* (see 7.14 n.) is to be dominated by selfish passions; to live *according to* (or *in*, v. 9) *the Spirit* is to belong to the new community of faith where God dwells as the Spirit. **9–10:** Note the similar, almost interchangeable, use of "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of Christ," and "Christ." **10:** Gal.2.20; Eph.3.17. **11:** Jn.5.21.

8.12–17: The Spirit and sonship. The Spirit does not make slaves of us, but sons. **15:** *Abba*, the Aramaic word meaning "Father," which Jesus used in his own prayers (Mk.14.36) and which passed into the liturgy of the early church. **16:** The fact that *the Spirit* prompts this ecstatic prayer proves our sonship (Gal.4.6).

8.18–25: The hope of fulfillment. 18: The Christian life involves *sufferings* (this was more obviously true then than now), but Paul rejoices in the sure hope of *glory* (5.2). **20:** *Of him*, God (Gen.3.17). **21:** When man (in Christ) is

glorious liberty of the children of God.²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now;²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.²⁷ And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because^j the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

28 We know that in everything God works for good^k with those who love him,^l who are called according to his purpose.²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren.³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us?³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's

elect? It is God who justifies;³⁴ who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?^m Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?³⁶ As it is written,

"For thy sake we are being killed all the day long;

we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

9 I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen by race.⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises;⁵ to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the

j Or that *k* Other ancient authorities read in everything he works for good, or everything works for good
l Greek God *m* Or It is Christ Jesus . . . for us

finally restored to his true nature and destiny, nature will also share in the freedom from *bondage to decay* and in the *glorious liberty*. **22–23:** Nature is thought of as sharing in the stress, anxiety, and pain which we ourselves feel as we wait for the promised *redemption*. *The first fruits of the Spirit*, the Spirit, already received, is an advanced installment of the full sonship we are yet to receive. *Our bodies*, as usually in Paul, our "selves," our "personalities." **24–25:** 1 Cor.2.9; 2 Cor.5.7; Heb.11.1.

8.26–30: Human weakness is sustained by the Spirit's intercession and by the knowledge of God's loving purpose. **28:** *His purpose*, or plan, is set forth in vv. 29–30. **29:** *To be conformed to . . . his Son* is to share the resurrection life of Christ, to be a "fellow heir" (compare v. 17), to be *glorified*.

8.31–39: Our confidence in God. **31:** Ps.118.6. **32:** 4.25; 5.8; Jn.3.16. **35:** To be a Christian in the first century was both difficult and dangerous. **36:** Ps.44.22. **38:** *Neither death, nor life*, i.e. whether we live or die we shall not be separated. *Angels . . . principalities . . . powers* are supernatural beings, whether evil or good, and of various ranks (see Eph.6.12.n.). **39:** *Height and depth*, the highest point to which the stars rise and the abyss out of which they were thought to ascend; i.e. no supposed astrological power can separate us from Christ or defeat God's purpose for us.

9.1–5: The problem of Israel's unbelief. **3:** Ex.32.32. **4:** *Sonship*, Ex.4.22; Jer.31.9. *Glory*, God's presence (Ex.16.10; 24.16). *Covenants*, plural because the covenant with Israel was often renewed (Gen.6.18; 9.9; 15.8; 17.2,7,9; Ex.2.24). *Giving the law*, Ex.20.1–17; Dt.5.1–21. *Worship*, in tabernacle and temple.

Christ. God who is over all be blessed for ever.ⁿ Amen.

6 But it is not as though the word of God had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,⁷ and not all are children of Abraham because they are his descendants; but “Through Isaac shall your descendants be named.”⁸ This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants.⁹ For this is what the promise said, “About this time I will return and Sarah shall have a son.”¹⁰ And not only so, but also when Rebecca had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac,¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad, in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call,¹² she was told, “The elder will serve the younger.”¹³ As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.”

14 What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God’s part? By no means!¹⁵ For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”¹⁶ So it depends not upon man’s will or exertion, but upon God’s mercy.¹⁷ For the scripture says to Pharaoh, “I have raised you up for the very purpose of showing my power in you, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”¹⁸ So then he has mercy upon whomever he wills, and he hardens the heart of whomever he wills.

19 You will say to me then, “Why does he still find fault? For who can resist his will?”²⁰ But who are you, a man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, “Why have you made me thus?”²¹ Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of

the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?²² What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath made for destruction,²³ in order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory,²⁴ even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?²⁵ As indeed he says in Hose’a,

“Those who were not my people
I will call ‘my people,’
and her who was not beloved
I will call ‘my beloved.’”

²⁶ “And in the very place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved;²⁸ for the Lord will execute his sentence upon the earth with rigor and dispatch.”²⁹ And as Isaiah predicted,

“If the Lord of hosts had not left us children,
we would have fared like Sodom and been made like Gomor’rah.”

30 What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, righteousness through faith;³¹ but that Israel who pursued the righteousness which is based on law did not succeed in fulfilling that law.³² Why? Because they did not pursue it through faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone,³³ as it is written,

n Or Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever

9.6–13: God’s promise to Israel has not failed, because the promise was not made to Abraham’s physical descendants merely as such, but to those whom God chose. **7:** Gen.21.12. **9:** Gen.18.10. **10–12:** Gen.25.21,23. **13:** Mal.1.2–3.

9.14–29: God’s right to choose. **15:** Ex.33.19. **17:** Ex.9.16. **19–21:** Is.29.16; 45.9; 64.8; Jer.18.6. **24:** God’s choice or election is not limited to *the Jews* (compare 3.29). **25–26:** The passage in *Hosea* (Hos.2.23; 1.10) refers to God’s reclaiming of Israel after she had forsaken God and lost her covenant status; Paul (as also 1 Pet.2.10) applies the promise to the Gentiles. **27–29:** God’s promise never included all Israelites (Is.10.22; 1.9). *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, Gen.19.24–25.

9.30–10.13: True righteousness is by faith. **9.30:** 3.22; 10.6,20; Gal.2.16; 3.24; Phil.3.9; Heb.11.7. **33:** Is.28.16

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall; and he who believes in him will not be put to shame.”

10 Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. ² I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened. ³ For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.

⁵ Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it. ⁶ But the righteousness based on faith says, Do not say in your heart, “Who will ascend into heaven?” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ or “Who will descend into the abyss?” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach); ⁹ because, if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him. ¹³ For, “every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are

they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!” ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” ¹⁷ So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.

¹⁸ But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for

“Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

¹⁹ Again I ask, did Israel not understand?

First Moses says,

“I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry.”

²⁰ Then Isaiah is so bold as to say,

“I have been found by those who did not seek me;

I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.”

²¹ But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

11 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Eli’jah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³ “Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have demolished thy altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life.” ⁴ But what is God’s reply to

and 8.14–15. The “stone” is a symbol of God’s help, but if neglected it becomes an instrument of judgment. Christ is this *stone*. **10.4:** Gal.3.23–26. **5:** Lev.18.5; Gal.3.12. One must actually *practice* the law if one is to find life through it; this Paul has already shown to be impossible (3.9–20). But one has only to *accept* the free gift of the salvation in Christ (vv. 6–9; compare Dt.30.11–14). **10:** Both faith and confession are essential for justification and salvation. **11:** Is.28.16. **13:** Jl.2.32. The early Christians often applied to Jesus Old Testament references to the *Lord*, which in their original context refer to God.

10.14–21: Israel responsible for its failure. 14–18: The nation cannot claim that it has not had the opportunity of hearing the gospel. **15:** Is.52.7. **16:** Is.53.1. **18:** Ps.19.4. **19–21:** Nor can Israel claim that it has not understood the gospel; even Gentiles have been able to understand it. **19:** Dt.32.21. **20–21:** Is.65.1–2.

11.1–16: Israel’s rejection not final. 1–6: As in Elijah’s time (1 Kg.19.10,18), there is a *remnant* of the faithful.

him? "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Ba'al."

⁵ So too at the present time there is a remnant, chose by grace. ⁶ But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it sought. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, ⁸ as it is written,

"God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes that should not see and ears that
should not hear,
down to this very day."

⁹ And David says,

"Let their table become a snare and a trap,
a pitfall and a retribution for them;

¹⁰ let their eyes be darkened so that they cannot see,
and bend their backs for ever."

11 So I ask, have they stumbled so as to fall? By no means! But through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹² Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

13 Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴ in order to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the dough offered as first fruits is holy, so is the whole lump; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the richness^o of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. ¹⁹ You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." ²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off. ²³ And even the others, if they do not persist in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

25 Lest you be wise in your own conceits, I want you to understand this mystery, brethren: a hardening has come upon part of Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles come in; ²⁶ and so all Israel will be saved; as it is written,

"The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";

²⁷ "and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins."

^o Other ancient authorities read *rich root*

Paul as a Jew is no more alone than Elijah was. **7–12:** The resistance to the gospel on the part of the masses of Jews is providential; God has *hardened their hearts* for a loving purpose, namely, that the Gentiles might have an opportunity to hear and receive the gospel. **8:** Is.29.10. **9:** Ps.69.22–23. **13–16:** The *reconciliation* of Gentiles will have the effect of making Israelites *jealous* and thus of drawing *some of them* to Christ. **16:** *The dough and the root* (Num.15.19–20 Septuagint; Jer.11.16–17) stand for the patriarchs, through whom all Israel has been consecrated.

11.17–24: The metaphor of the olive tree. The tree, including root and branches, is Israel. The branches broken off are the unbelieving Jews; the branches grafted in are Gentiles who believe in Christ. **20–22:** Having been made a part of the tree only because of faith (not merit or works), Gentile believers have no reason for pride, else God who has grafted them into the tree may later cut them off. **24:** The restoration of Israel will be easier than the call of the Gentiles.

11.25–36: All Israel will be saved. 25–26: A *mystery*, a truth once hidden, but now revealed by God. The *full number of the Gentiles* may mean the elect from among the Gentiles; and *all Israel* may mean Israel as a whole, not every

²⁸ As regards the gospel they are enemies of God, for your sake; but as regards election they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may^p receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all.

³³ O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

³⁵ "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?"

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory for ever. Amen.

12 I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

² Do not be conformed to this world^q but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.^r

³ For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him.

⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of

another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly;^s never be conceited. ¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it^t to the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ No, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

p Other ancient authorities add *now* *q* Greek *age*
r Or *what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God* *s* Or *give yourselves to humble tasks*
t Greek *give place*

particular Israelite. **26–27:** Is.59.20–21; 27.9. **28–32:** Although temporarily *enemies* of the gospel, the *election* of the Jews is *irrevocable*. **33:** The wonder of God's providence. **34:** Is.40.13. **35:** Job 35.7; 41.11. **36:** 1 Cor.8.6; 11.12; Col.1.16; Heb.2.10.

12.1–8: The consecrated life. **1:** *Bodies*, as usually in Paul, means "selves." *Living sacrifice*, as contrasted to the sacrifice of a slain beast. **2:** Christians are to live as belonging to the coming age, not this present age (Eph.4.23; 1 Jn.2.15). *Prove* means "have sure knowledge of." **3:** *Measure of faith*, measure of the Spirit which one has received by faith (1 Cor.4.7). **4–8:** 1 Cor.12.4–31. **8:** *He who gives aid*, or "he who rules."

12.9–21: The Christian's duty. **9–18:** The law of love (compare 1 Cor.13). **13:** *Hospitality*, see 16.1–2 n.; Heb.13.2 n.; 3 Jn.5–8 n. **14:** Mt.5.44. **19:** The vindication of justice is God's prerogative, not ours (Dt.32.35). We are neither wise enough nor good enough to punish our enemies justly. **20:** *To heap burning coals*. . . , is to make the enemy feel ashamed by meeting his *evil* with *good* (Pr.25.21–22).

13 Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. ⁶ For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. ⁷ Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.

⁸ Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this sentence, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

¹¹ Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

13.1–7: The Christian and the state. Though the Christian has no right to punish (12.19–21), the state does have that right and the Christian must respect it. Paul's confidence that the Roman state is, on the whole, just and beneficent is matched in 1 Pet.2.13–17; 3.13.

13.8–10: Love fulfils the law. **8a:** Pay every debt; do not stand under any obligation except the obligation to love. **8b–10:** Mk.12.31; Jas.2.8.

13.11–14: The imminence of Christ's second coming makes it the more urgent that Christians *conduct* themselves *becomingly*. **14:** To *put on the Lord Jesus Christ* is to enter fully into the new order of existence which God has created through Christ (see 6.1–14 n.).

Reading 11

AUGUSTINE, CONFESSIONS

Introduction by Michael Graham

Augustine, second only to St. Paul in his influence on Christian theology, was born in 354 in a town which is today in Algeria. In his late teens, he went off to study at Carthage, a major city in north Africa. After a short stint teaching in his native town, he returned to Carthage for several years, before departing for Italy in 383. The following year he became a professor of rhetoric in Milan, the northern Italian city which had become home to the Roman emperor, and came under the influence of Ambrose, bishop of Milan. In 386, at the age of 32, he converted to Christianity, the religion of his mother Monica as well as his friend Ambrose. In 388 he returned to north Africa, and in 391, at the age of 37, became a priest there, in the port city of Hippo. In 396 he became bishop of Hippo, a post he held for the rest of his life. Augustine died in 430 while Hippo was under siege by the Vandals, invaders from Germany.

Augustine was charismatic, intelligent and curious. These qualities made him popular with friends, and helped him rise to prominence once he embarked on a career in the Church. His best-known theological work was *City of God*, a book he was moved to write after the Visigoths, another Germanic tribe, sacked Rome in 410. Many Romans blamed this historic defeat on the suppression of Roman pagan cults by Christian rulers, and suggested that if Christianity had been the right choice for Rome, the city would not have fallen. In *City of God*, Augustine, who was a great admirer of many aspects of Roman civilization, responded that **empires would rise and fall but only God's kingdom was eternal**. No earthly empire could remain impregnable, Augustine argued, because life on earth was a passing thing. God's kingdom, ultimately far more important, would last. **Augustine was also an active controversialist, defending (and in the process helping to define) Church doctrines against various heresies, including the Pelagians, who rejected the idea of Original Sin and claimed that people could earn eternal salvation through their own good behavior.**

But most interestingly for our purposes, Augustine was a seeker. In his youth he experimented with many lifestyles and philosophies, before deciding that Christianity offered the answers for which he had been searching. He became well-acquainted with Roman culture and Greek philosophy, as well as the ideas of the Manicheans, who saw the world as sharply divided between the forces of good and evil. Also, as a teenager he became involved with a girl by whom he had a child, and with whom he lived for many years, although they never married.

Years later, he recorded his spiritual and philosophical journey in his *Confessions*, a landmark in autobiographical literature, which covers Augustine's life up to age 35. It is important

to remember that the *Confessions*, only a part of which you are about to read, is an autobiography, not a diary. Rather than copying down a daily or weekly record of events, Augustine was, as a mature adult, recalling his early years. He was thus telling a story for which he already knew the outcome—that he would convert to Christianity. How might this have affected the way he told the story? Not surprisingly, Augustine’s father and mother loomed large in his recollection of his early life. What roles did they, particularly his mother, play in his upbringing? What particular sins and temptations did Augustine seem most troubled by? Many of us go through long periods of personal development, often labeled “growing up,” before choosing a course to follow in life. Some never find that course. Do you see something of yourself in Augustine? Also of interest in this work is the extent to which Greek and Roman culture dominated the Mediterranean world, including Augustine’s corner of north Africa. What were some of his major intellectual influences? Do you think this work is timeless, or does it no longer carry a message for us?

CONFESSIONS

BOOK I

14

If this was so, why did I dislike Greek literature, which tells these tales, as much as the Greek language itself? Homer, as well as Virgil, was a skilful spinner of yarns and he is most delightfully imaginative. Nevertheless, as a boy, I found him little to my taste. I suppose that Greek boys think the same about Virgil when they are forced to study him as I was forced to study Homer. There was of course the difficulty which is found in learning any foreign language, and this soured the sweetness of the Greek romances. For I understood not a single word and I was constantly subjected to violent threats and cruel punishments to make me learn. As a baby, of course, I knew no Latin either, but I learned it without fear and fret, simply by keeping my ears open while my nurses fondled me and everyone laughed and played happily with me. I learned it without being forced by threats of punishment, because it was my own wish to be able to give expression to my thoughts. I could never have done this if I had not learnt a few words, not from schoolmasters, but from people who spoke to me and listened when I delivered to their ears whatever thoughts I had conceived. This clearly shows that we learn better in a free spirit of curiosity than under fear and compulsion. But your law, O God, permits the free flow of curiosity to be stemmed by force. From the schoolmaster's cane to the ordeals of martyrdom, your law prescribes bitter medicine to retrieve us from the noxious pleasures which cause us to desert you.

15

Grant my prayer, O Lord, and do not allow my soul to wilt under the discipline which you prescribe. Let me not tire of thanking you for your mercy in rescuing me from all my wicked ways, so that you may be sweeter to me than all the joys which used to tempt me; so that I may love you most intensely and clasp your hand with all the power of my devotion; so that you may save me from all temptation until the end of my days.

You, O Lord, are my King and my God, and in your service I want to use whatever good I learned as a boy. I can speak and write, read and count, and I want these things to be used to serve you, because when I studied other subjects you checked me and forgave me the sins I committed by taking pleasure in such worthless things. It is true that these studies taught me many useful words, but the same words can be learnt by studying something that matters, and this is the safe course for a boy to follow.

16

But we are carried away by custom to our own undoing and it is hard to struggle against the stream. Will this torrent never dry up? How much longer will it sweep the sons of Adam down to that vast and terrible sea which cannot easily be passed, even by those who climb upon the ark of the Cross?

This traditional education taught me that Jupiter punishes the wicked with his thunderbolts and yet commits adultery himself. The two roles are quite incompatible. All the same he is represented in this way, and the result is that those who follow his example in adultery can put a bold face on it by making false pretences of thunder. But can any schoolmaster in his gown listen unperturbed to a man who challenges him on his own ground and says 'Homer invented these stories and attributed human sins to the gods. He would have done better to provide men with examples of divine goodness'?¹ It would be nearer the truth to say that Homer certainly invented the tales but peopled them with wicked human characters in the guise of gods. In this way their wickedness would not be reckoned a crime, and all who did as they did could be shown to follow the example of the heavenly gods, not that of sinful mortals.

And yet human children are pitched into this hellish torrent, together with the fees which are paid to have them taught lessons like these. Much business is at stake, too, when these matters are publicly debated, because the law decrees that teachers would be paid a salary in addition to the fees paid by their pupils. And the roar of the torrent beating upon its boulders seems to say 'This is the school where men are made masters of words. This is where they learn the art of persuasion, so necessary in business and debate'—as much as to say that, but for a certain passage in Terence, we should never have heard of words like 'shower', 'golden', 'lap', 'deception', 'sky', and the other words which occur in the same scene. Terence brings on to the stage a dissolute youth who excuses his own fornication by pointing to the example of Jupiter. He looks at a picture painted on the wall, which 'shows how Jupiter is said to have deceived the girl Danae by raining a golden shower into her lap.'² These are the words with which he incites himself to lechery, as though he had heavenly authority for it: 'What a god he is! His mighty thunder rocks the sky from end to end. You may say that I am only a man, and thundering is beyond my power. But I played the rest of the part well enough, and willingly too'!²

The words are certainly not learnt any the more easily by reason of the filthy mortal, but filth is committed with greater confidence as a result of learning the words. I have nothing against the words themselves. They are like choice and costly glasses, but they contain the wine of error which had already gone to the heads of the teachers who poured it out for us to drink. If we refused to drink, we were beaten for it, without the right to appeal to a sober judge. With your eyes upon me, my God, my memory can safely recall those days. But it is true that I learned all these things gladly and took a sinful pleasure in them. And for this very reason I was called a promising boy.

17

Let me tell you, my God, how I squandered the brains you gave me on foolish delusions. I was set a task which troubled me greatly, for if I were successful, I might win some praise: if not, I was afraid of disgrace or a beating. I had to recite the speech of Juno,³ who was pained and angry because she could not prevent Aeneas from sailing to Italy. I had been told that Juno had never really spoken the words, but we were compelled to make believe and follow the flight of the poet's fancy by repeating in prose what he had said in verse. The contest was to be won by the boy who found the best words to suit the meaning and best expressed feelings of sorrow and anger appropriate to the majesty of the character he impersonated.

What did all this matter to me, my God, my true Life? Why did my recitation win more praise than those of the many other boys in my class? Surely it was all so much smoke without fire? Was there no other subject on which I might have sharpened my wits and my tongue? I might have used them, O Lord, to praise you in the words of your Scriptures, which could have been a prop to support my heart, as if it were a young vine, so that it would not have produced this crop of worthless fruit, fit only for the birds to peck at. For offerings can be made to those birds of prey, the fallen angels, in more ways than one.

18

But was it surprising that I was lured into these fruitless pastimes and wandered away from you, my God? I was expected to model myself upon men who were disconcerted by the rebukes they received if they used outlandish words or strange idioms to tell of some quite harmless thing they might have done, but revelled in the applause they earned for the fine flow of well-ordered and nicely balanced phrases with which they described their own acts of indecency. You see all these things, Lord, and yet you keep silence, because you are patient and full of compassion and can tell no lie.⁴ Will you be silent for ever? This very day you are ready to rescue from this fear-^{idea of a compassion God} some abyss any soul that searches for you, any man who says from the depths of his heart, *I have eyes only for you; I long, Lord, for your presence;*⁵ for the soul that is blinded by wicked passions is far from you and cannot see your face. The path that leads us away from you and brings us back again is not measured by footsteps or milestones. The prodigal son of the Scriptures went to live in a distant land to waste in dissipation all the wealth which his father had given him when he set out. But, to reach that land, he did not hire horses, carriages, or ships; he did not take to the air on real wings to set one foot before the other. For you were the Father who gave him riches. You loved him when he set out and you loved him still more when he came home without a penny. But he set his heart on pleasure and his soul was blinded, and this blindness was the measure of the distance he travelled away from you, so that he could not see your face.

O Lord my God, be patient, as you always are, with the men of this world as you watch them and see how strictly they obey the rules of grammar which have been handed down to them, and yet ignore the eternal rules of everlasting salvation which they have received from you. A man who has learnt the traditional rules of pronunciation, or teaches them to others, gives greater scandal if he breaks them by dropping the aitch from 'human being' than if he breaks your rules and hates another human, his fellow man. This is just as perverse as to imagine that our enemies can do us more harm than we do to ourselves by hating them, or that by persecuting another man we can damage him more fatally than we damage our own hearts in the process. O God, alone in majesty, high in the silence of heaven, unseen by man! we can see how your unremitting justice punishes unlawful ambition with blindness, for a man who longs for fame as a fine speaker will stand up before a human judge, surrounded by a human audience, and lash his opponent with malicious invective, taking the greatest care not to say 'uman' instead of 'human' by a slip of the tongue, and yet the thought that the frenzy in his own mind may condemn a human being to death disturbs him not at all.

19

It was at the threshold of a world such as this that I stood in peril as a boy. I was already being prepared for its tournaments by a training which taught me to have a horror of faculty grammar instead of teaching me, when I committed these faults, not to envy others who avoided them. All this, my God, I admit and confess to you. By these means I won praise from the people

whose favour I sought, for I thought that the right way to live was to do as they wished. I was blind to the whirlpool of debasement in which I had been plunged away from the sight of your eyes. For in your eyes nothing could be more debased than I was then, since I was even troublesome to the people whom I set out to please. Many and many a time I lied to my tutor, my masters, and my parents, and deceived them because I wanted to play games or watch some futile show or was impatient to imitate what I saw on the stage. I even stole from my parents' larder and from their table, either from greed or to get something to give to other boys in exchange for their favourite toys, which they were willing to barter with me. And in the games I played with them I often cheated in order to come off the better, simply because a vain desire to win had got the better of me. And yet there was nothing I could less easily endure, nothing that made me quarrel more bitterly, than to find others cheating me as I cheated them. All the same, if they found me out and blamed me for it, I would lose my temper rather than give in.

Can this be the innocence of childhood? Far from it, O Lord! But I beg you to forgive it. For commanders and kings may take the place of tutors and schoolmasters, nuts and balls and pet birds may give way to money and estates and servants, but these same passions remain with us while one stage of life follows upon another, just as more severe punishments follow upon the schoolmaster's cane. It was, then, simply because they are small that you used children to symbolize humility when, as our King, you commended it by saying that *the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these*.⁶

20

And yet, Lord, even if you had willed that I should not survive my childhood, I should have owed you gratitude, because you are our God, the supreme God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe. For even as a child I existed, I was alive, I had the power of feeling; I had an instinct to keep myself safe and sound, to preserve my own being, which was a trace of the single unseen Being from whom it was derived; I had an inner sense which watched over my bodily senses and kept them in full vigour; and even in the small things which occupied my thoughts I found pleasure in the truth. I disliked finding myself in the wrong; my memory was good; I was acquiring the command of words; I enjoyed the company of friends; and I shrank from pain, ignorance, and sorrow. Should I not be grateful that so small a creature possessed such wonderful qualities? But they were all gifts from God, for I did not give them to myself. His gifts are good and the sum of them all is my own self. Therefore, the God who made me must be good and all the good in me is his. I thank him and praise him for all the good in my life, even my life as a boy. But my sin was this, that I looked for pleasure, beauty, and truth not in him but in myself and his other creatures, and the search led me instead to pain, confusion, and error. My God, in whom is my delight, my glory, and my trust, I thank you for your gifts and beg you to preserve and keep them for me. Keep me, too, and so your gifts will grow and reach perfection and I shall be with you myself, for I should not even exist if it were not by your gift.

BOOK II

1

from
past experiences
and ask
for
forgiveness

I must now carry my thoughts back to the abominable things I did in those days, the sins of the flesh which defiled my soul. I do this, my God, not because I love those sins, but so that I may love you. For love of your love I shall retrace my wicked ways. The memory is bitter, but it will

help me to savour your sweetness, the sweetness that does not deceive but brings real joy and never fails. For love of your love I shall retrieve myself from the havoc of disruption which tore me to pieces when I turned away from you, whom alone I should have sought, and lost myself instead on many a different quest. For as I grew to manhood I was inflamed with desire for a surfeit of hell's pleasures. Foolhardy as I was, I ran wild with lust that was manifold and rank. In your eyes my beauty vanished and I was foul to the core, yet I was pleased with my own condition and anxious to be pleasing in the eyes of men.

2

I cared for nothing but to love and be loved. But my love went beyond the affection of one mind for another, beyond the arc of the bright beam of friendship. Bodily desire, like a morass, and adolescent sex welling up within me exuded mists which clouded over and obscured my heart, so that I could not distinguish the clear light of true love from the murk of lust. Love and lust together seethed within me. In my tender youth they swept me away over the precipice of my body's appetites and plunged me in the whirlpool of sin. More and more I angered you, unawares. For I had been deafened by the clank of my chains, the fetters of the death which was my due to punish the pride in my soul. I strayed still farther from you and you did not restrain me. I was tossed and spilled, floundering in the broiling sea of my fornication, and you said no word. How long it was before I learned that you were my true joy! You were silent then, and I went on my way, farther and farther from you, proud in my distress and restless in fatigue, sowing more and more seeds whose only crop was grief.

Was there no one to lull my distress, to turn the fleeting beauty of these new-found attractions to good purpose and set up a goal for their charms, so that the high tide of my youth might have rolled in upon the shore of marriage? The surge might have been calmed and contented by the procreation of children, which is the purpose of marriage, as your law prescribes, O Lord. By this means you form the offspring of our fallen nature, and with a gentle hand you prune back the thorns that have no place in your paradise. For your almighty power is not far from us, even when we are far from you. Or, again, I might have listened more attentively to your voice from the clouds, saying of those who marry that they will *meet with outward distress, but I leave you your freedom*,⁷ that *a man does well to abstain from all commerce with women*,⁸ and that *he who is unmarried is concerned with God's claim, asking how he is to please God; whereas the married man is concerned with the world's claim, asking how he is to please his wife*.⁹ These were the words to which I should have listened with more care, and if I had made myself a *eunuch for love of the kingdom of heaven*,¹⁰ I should have awaited your embrace with all the greater joy.

But instead, I was in a ferment of wickedness. I deserted you and allowed myself to be carried away by the sweep of the tide. I broke all your lawful bounds and did not escape your lash. For what man can escape it? You were always present, angry and merciful at once, strewing the pangs of bitterness over all my lawless pleasures to lead me on to look for others unallied with pain. You meant me to find them nowhere but in yourself, O Lord, for you teach us by inflicting pain,¹¹ you smite so that you may heal,¹² and you kill us so that we may not die away from you. Where was I then and how far was I banished from the bliss of your house in that sixteenth year of my life? This was the age at which the frenzy gripped me and I surrendered myself entirely to lust, which your law forbids but human hearts are not ashamed to sanction. My family made no effort to save me from my fall by marriage. Their only concern was that I should learn how to make a good speech and how to persuade others by my words.

3

In the same year my studies were interrupted. I had already begun to go to the near-by town of Madaura to study literature and the art of public speaking, but I was brought back home while my father, a modest citizen of Thagaste whose determination was greater than his means, saved up the money to send me farther afield to Carthage. I need not tell all this to you, my God, but in your presence I tell it to my own kind, to those other men, however few, who may perhaps pick up this book. And I tell it so that I and all who read my words may realize the depths from which we are to cry to you. Your ears will surely listen to the cry of a penitent heart which lives the life of faith.

No one had anything but praise for my father who, despite his slender resources, was ready to provide his son with all that was needed to enable him to travel so far for the purpose of study. Many of our townsmen, far richer than my father, went to no such trouble for their children's sake. Yet this same father of mine took no trouble at all to see how I was growing in your sight or whether I was chaste or not. He cared only that I should have a fertile tongue, leaving my heart to bear none of your fruits, my God, though you are the only Master, true and good, of its husbandry.

In the meanwhile, during my sixteenth year, the narrow means of my family obliged me to leave school and live idly at home with my parents. The brambles of lust grew high above my head and there was no one to root them out, certainly not my father. One day at the public baths he saw the signs of active virility coming to life in me and this was enough to make him relish the thought of having grandchildren. He was happy to tell my mother about it, for his happiness was due to the intoxication which causes the world to forget you, its Creator, and to love the things you have created instead of loving you, because the world is drunk with the invisible wine of its own perverted, earthbound will. But in my mother's heart you had already begun to build your temple and laid the foundations of your holy dwelling, while my father was still a catechumen and a new one at that. So in her piety, she became alarmed and apprehensive, and although I had not yet been baptized, she began to dread that I might follow in the crooked path of those who do not keep their eyes on you but turn their backs instead.

How presumptuous it was of me to say that you were silent, my God, when I drifted farther and farther away from you! Can it be true that you said nothing to me at that time? Surely the words which rang in my ears, spoken by your faithful servant, my mother, could have come from none but you? Yet none of them sank into my heart to make me do as you said. I well remember what her wishes were and how she most earnestly warned me not to commit fornication and above all not to seduce any man's wife. It all seemed womanish advice to me and I should have blushed to accept it. Yet the words were yours, though I did not know it. I thought that you were silent and that she was speaking, but all the while you were speaking to me through her, and when I disregarded her, your handmaid, I was disregarding you, though I was both her son and your servant. But I did this unawares and continued headlong on my way. I was so blind to the truth that among my companions I was ashamed to be less dissolute than they were. For I heard them bragging of their depravity, and the greater the sin the more they gloried in it, so that I took pleasure in the same vices not only for the enjoyment of what I did, but also for the applause I won.

Nothing deserves to be despised more than vice; yet I gave in more and more to vice simply in order not to be despised. If I had not sinned enough to rival other sinners, I used to pretend that I had done things I had not done at all, because I was afraid that innocence would be taken for cowardice and chastity for weakness. These were the companions with whom I walked the streets of Babylon. I wallowed in its mire as if it were made of spices and precious ointments,

mother
carried for
his eternal
soul

he tried to
hide him
behind the
word

and to fix me all the faster in the very depths of sin the unseen enemy trod me underfoot and enticed me to himself, because I was an easy prey for his seductions. For even my mother, who by now had escaped from the centre of Babylon, though she still loitered in its outskirts, did not act upon what she had heard about me from her husband with the same earnestness as she had advised me about chastity. She saw that I was already infected with a disease that would become dangerous later on, but if the growth of my passions could not be cut back to the quick, she did not think it right to restrict them to the bounds of married love. This was because she was afraid that the bonds of marriage might be a hindrance to my hopes for the future—not of course the hope of the life to come, which she reposed in you, but my hopes of success at my studies. Both my parents were unduly eager for me to learn, my father because he gave next to no thought to you and only shallow thought to me, and my mother because she thought the usual course of study would certainly not hinder me, but would even help me, in my approach to you. To the best of my memory this is how I construe the characters of my parents. Furthermore, I was given a free rein to amuse myself beyond the strict limits of discipline, so that I lost myself in many kinds of evil ways, in all of which a pall of darkness hung between me and the bright light of your truth, my God. What malice proceeded from my pampered heart!¹³

4

It is certain, O Lord, that theft is punished by your law, the law that is written in men's hearts and cannot be erased however sinful they are. For no thief can bear that another thief should steal from him, even if he is rich and the other is driven to it by want. Yet I was willing to steal, and steal I did, although I was not compelled by any lack, unless it were the lack of a sense of justice or a distaste for what was right and a greedy love of doing wrong. For what I stole I already had plenty, and much better at that, and I had no wish to enjoy the things I coveted by stealing, but only to enjoy the theft itself and the sin. There was a pear-tree near our vineyard, loaded with fruit that was attractive neither to look at nor to taste. Late one night a band of ruffians, myself included, went off to shake down the fruit and carry it away, for we had continued our games out of doors until well after dark, as was our pernicious habit. We took away an enormous quantity of pears, not to eat them ourselves, but simply to throw them to the pigs. Perhaps we ate some of them, but our real pleasure consisted in doing something that was forbidden.

Look into my heart, O God, the same heart on which you took pity when it was in the depths of the abyss. Let my heart now tell you what prompted me to do wrong for no purpose, and why it was only my own love of mischief that made me do it. The evil in me was foul, but I loved it. I loved my own perdition and my own faults, not the things for which I committed wrong, but the wrong itself. My soul was vicious and broke away from your safe keeping to seek its own destruction, looking for no profit in disgrace but only for disgrace itself.

5

The eye is attracted by beautiful objects, by gold and silver and all such things. There is great pleasure, too, in feeling something agreeable to the touch, and material things have various qualities to please each of the other senses. Again, it is gratifying to be held in esteem by other men and to have the power of giving them orders and gaining the mastery over them. This is also the reason why revenge is sweet. But our ambition to obtain all these things must not lead us astray from you, O Lord, nor must we depart from what your law allows. The life we live on earth has its own attractions as well, because it has a certain beauty of its own in harmony with all the rest of this world's beauty. Friendship among men, too, is a delightful bond, uniting many souls in one. All these things and their like can be occasions of sin because, good though

they are, they are of the lowest order of good, and if we are too much tempted by them we abandon those higher and better things, your truth, your law, and you yourself, O Lord our God. For these earthly things, too, can give joy, though not such joy as my God, who made them all, can give, because *honest men will rejoice in the Lord; upright hearts will not boast in vain*.¹⁴

When there is an inquiry to discover why a crime has been committed, normally no one is satisfied until it has been shown that the motive might have been either the desire of gaining, or the fear of losing, one of those good things which I said were of the lowest order. For such things are attractive and have beauty, although they are paltry trifles in comparison with the worth of God's blessed treasures. A man commits murder and we ask the reason. He did it because he wanted his victim's wife or estates for himself, or so that he might live on the proceeds of robbery, or because he was afraid that the other might defraud him of something, or because he had been wronged and was burning for revenge. Surely no one would believe that he would commit murder for no reason but the sheer delight of killing? Sallust tells us that Catiline was a man of insane ferocity, 'who chose to be cruel and vicious without apparent reason';¹⁵ but we are also told that his purpose was 'not to allow his men to lose heart or waste their skill through lack of practice'.¹⁶ If we ask the reason for this, it is obvious that he meant that once he had made himself master of the government by means of this continual violence, he would obtain honour, power, and wealth and would no longer go in fear of the law because of his crimes or have to face difficulties through lack of funds. So even Catiline did not love crime for crime's sake. He loved something quite different, for the sake of which he committed his crimes.

6

If the crime of theft which I committed that night as a boy of sixteen were a living thing, I could speak to it and ask what it was that, to my shame, I loved in it. I had no beauty because it was a robbery. It is true that the pears which we stole had beauty, because they were created by you, the good God, who are the most beautiful of all beings and the Creator of all things, the supreme Good and my own true Good. But it was not the pears that my unhappy soul desired. I had plenty of my own, better than those, and I only picked them so that I might steal. For no sooner had I picked them than I threw them away, and tasted nothing in them but my own sin, which I relished and enjoyed. If any part of one of those pears passed my lips, it was the sin that gave it flavour.

And now, O Lord my God, now that I ask what pleasure I had in that theft, I find that it had no beauty to attract me. I do not mean beauty of the sort that justice and prudence possess, nor the beauty that is in man's mind and in his memory and in the life that animates him, nor the beauty of the stars in their allotted places or of the earth and sea, teeming with new life born to replace the old as it passes away. It did not even have the shadowy, deceptive beauty which makes vice attractive—pride, for instance, which is a pretence of superiority, imitating yours, for you alone are God, supreme over all; or ambition, which is only a craving for honour and glory, when you alone are to be honoured before all and you alone are glorious for ever. Cruelty is the weapon of the powerful, used to make others fear them: yet no one is to be feared but God alone, from whose power nothing can be snatched away or stolen by any man at any time or place or by any means. The lustful use caresses to win the love they crave for, yet no one caress is sweeter than your charity and no love is more rewarding than the love of your truth, which shines in beauty above all else. Inquisitiveness has all the appearance of a thirst for knowledge, yet you have supreme knowledge of all things. Ignorance, too, and stupidity choose to go under the mask of simplicity and innocence, because you are simplicity itself and no innocence is

greater than yours. You are innocent even of the harm which overtakes the wicked, for it is the result of their own actions. Sloth poses as the love of peace: yet what certain peace is there besides the Lord? Extravagance masquerades as fullness and abundance: but you are the full, unfailing store of never-dying sweetness. The spendthrift makes a pretence of liberality: but you are the most generous dispenser of all good. The covetous want many possessions for themselves: you possess all. The envious struggle for preferment: but what is to be preferred before you? Anger demands revenge: but what vengeance is as just as yours? Fear shrinks from any sudden, unwonted danger which threatens the things that it loves, for its only care is safety: but to you nothing is strange, nothing unforeseen. No one can part you from the things that you love, and safety is assured nowhere but in you. Grief eats away its heart for the loss of things which it took pleasure in desiring, because it wants to be like you, from whom nothing can be taken away.

So the soul defiles itself with unchaste love when it turns away from you and looks elsewhere for things which it cannot find pure and unsullied except by returning to you. All who desert you and set themselves up against you merely copy you in a perverse way; but by this very act of imitation they only show that you are the Creator of all nature and, consequently, that there is no place whatever where man may hide away from you.

What was it, then, that pleased me in the act of theft? Which of my Lord's powers did I imitate in a perverse and wicked way? Since I had no real power to break his law, was it that I enjoyed at least the pretence of doing so, like a prisoner who creates for himself the illusion of liberty by doing something wrong, when he has no fear of punishment, under a feeble hallucination of power? Here was the slave who ran away from his master and chased a shadow instead! What an abomination! What a parody of life! What abysmal death! Could I enjoy doing wrong for no other reason than that it was wrong?

7

What return shall I make to the Lord¹⁷ for my ability to recall these things with no fear in my soul? I will love you, Lord, and thank you, and praise your name, because you have forgiven me such great sins and such wicked deeds. I acknowledge that it was by your grace and mercy that you melted away my sins like ice. I acknowledge, too, that by your grace I was preserved from whatever sins I did not commit, for there was no knowing what I might have done, since I loved evil even if it served no purpose. I avow that you have forgiven me all, both the sins which I committed of my own accord and those which by your guidance I was spared from committing.

Admiration for his behaviour
How he will worship God!

What man who reflects upon his own weakness can dare to claim that his own efforts have made him chaste and free from sin, as though this entitled him to love you the less, on the ground that he had less need of the mercy by which you forgive the sins of the penitent? There are some who have been called by you and because they have listened to your voice they have avoided the sins which I here record and confess for them to read. But let them not deride me for having been cured by the same Doctor who preserved them from sickness, or at least from such grave sickness as mine. Let them love you just as much, or even more, than I do, for they can see that the same healing hand which rid me of the great fever of my sins protects them from falling sick of the same disease.

8

It brought me no happiness, for *what harvest did I reap from acts which now make me blush*,¹⁸ particularly from the act of theft? I loved nothing in it except the thieving, though I cannot truly speak of that as a 'thing' that I could love, and I was only the more miserable because of it. And

yet, as I recall my feelings at the time, I am quite sure that I would not have done it on my own. Was it then that I also enjoyed the company of those with whom I committed the crime? If this is so, there was something else I loved besides the act of theft; but I cannot call it 'something else', because companionship, like theft, is not a thing at all.

No one can tell me the truth of it except my God, who enlightens my mind and dispels its shadows. What conclusion am I trying to reach from these questions and this discussion? It is true that if the pears which I stole had been to my taste, and if I had wanted to get them for myself, I might have committed the crime on my own if I had needed to do no more than that to win myself the pleasure. I should have had no need to kindle my glowing desire by rubbing shoulders with a gang of accomplices. But as it was not the fruit that gave me pleasure, I must have got it from the crime itself, from the thrill of having partners in sin.

9

How can I explain my mood? It was certainly a very vile frame of mind and one for which I suffered; but how can I account for it? *Who knows his own frailties?*¹⁹

We were tickled to laughter by the prank we had played, because no one suspected us of it although the owners were furious. Why was it, then, that I thought it fun not to have been the only culprit? Perhaps it was because we do not easily laugh when we are alone. True enough: but even when a man is all by himself and quite alone, sometimes he cannot help laughing if he thinks or hears or sees something especially funny. All the same, I am quite sure that I would never have done this thing on my own.

My God, I lay all this before you, for it is still alive in my memory. By myself I would not have committed that robbery. It was not the takings that attracted me but the raid itself, and yet to do it by myself would have been no fun and I should not have done it. This was friendship of a most unfriendly sort, bewitching my mind in an inexplicable way. For the sake of a laugh, a little sport, I was glad to do harm and anxious to damage another; and that without thought of profit for myself or retaliation for injuries received! And all because we are ashamed to hold back when others say 'Come on! Let's do it!'

10

Can anyone unravel this twisted tangle of knots? I shudder to look at it or think of such abomination. I long instead for innocence and justice, graceful and splendid in eyes whose sight is undefiled. My longing fills me and yet it cannot cloy. With them is certain peace and life that cannot be disturbed. The man who enters their domain goes to *share the joy of his Lord*.²⁰ He shall know no fear and shall lack no good. In him that is goodness itself he shall find his own best way of life. But I deserted you, my God. In my youth I wandered away, too far from your sustaining hand, and created of myself a barren waste.

BOOK III

1

I went to Carthage, where I found myself in the midst of a hissing cauldron of lust. I had not yet fallen in love, but I was in love with the idea of it, and this feeling that something was missing made me despise myself for not being more anxious to satisfy the need. I began to look around for some object for my love, since I badly wanted to love something. I had no liking for the safe

path without pitfalls, for although my real need was for you, my God, who are the food of the soul, I was not aware of this hunger. I felt no need for the food that does not perish, not because I had had my fill of it, but because the more I was starved of it the less palatable it seemed. Because of this my soul fell sick. It broke out in ulcers and looked about desperately for some material, worldly means of relieving the itch which they caused. But material things, which have no soul, could not be true objects for my love. To love and to have my love returned was my heart's desire, and it would be all the sweeter if I could also enjoy the body of the one who loved me.

So I muddled the stream of friendship with the filth of lewdness and clouded its clear waters with hell's black river of lust. And yet, in spite of this rank depravity, I was vain enough to have ambitions of cutting a fine figure in the world. I also fell in love, which was a snare of my own choosing. My God, my God of mercy, how good you were to me, for you mixed much bitterness in that cup of pleasure! My love was returned and finally shackled me in the bonds of its consummation. In the midst of my joy I was caught up in the coils of trouble, for I was lashed with the cruel, fiery rods of jealousy and suspicion, fear, anger, and quarrels.

2

I was much attracted by the theatre, because the plays reflected my own unhappy plight and were tinder to my fire. Why is it that men enjoy feeling sad at the sight of tragedy and suffering on the stage, although they would be most unhappy if they had to endure the same fate themselves? Yet they watch the plays because they hope to be made to feel sad, and the feeling of sorrow is what they enjoy. What miserable delirium this is! The more a man is subject to such suffering himself, the more easily he is moved by it in the theatre. Yet when he suffers himself, we call it misery: when he suffers out of sympathy with others, we call it pity. But what sort of pity can we really feel for an imaginary scene on the stage? The audience is not called upon to offer help but only to feel sorrow, and the more they are pained the more they applaud the author. Whether this human agony is based on fact or is simply imaginary, if it is acted so badly that the audience is not moved to sorrow, they leave the theatre in a disgruntled and critical mood; whereas, if they are made to feel pain, they stay to the end watching happily.

This shows that sorrow and tears can be enjoyable. Of course, everyone wants to be happy; but even if no one likes being sad, is there just the one exception that, because we enjoy pitying others, we welcome their misfortunes, without which we could not pity them? If so, it is because friendly feelings well up in us like the waters of a spring. But what course do these waters follow? Where do they flow? Why do they trickle away to join that stream of boiling pitch, the hideous flood of lust? For by their own choice they lose themselves and become absorbed in it. They are diverted from their true course and deprived of their original heavenly calm.

Of course this does not mean that we must arm ourselves against compassion. There are times when we must welcome sorrow on behalf of others. But for the sake of our souls we must beware of uncleanness. My God must be the Keeper of my soul, the God of our fathers, who is to be exalted and extolled for ever more. My soul must guard against uncleanness.

I am not nowadays insensible to pity. But in those days I used to share the joy of stage lovers and their sinful pleasure in each other even though it was all done in make-believe for the sake of entertainment; and when they were parted, pity of a sort led me to share their grief. I enjoyed both these emotions equally. But now I feel more pity for a man who is happy in his sins than for one who has to endure the ordeal of forgoing some harmful pleasure or being

deprived of some enjoyment which was really an affliction. Of the two, this sort of pity is certainly the more genuine, but the sorrow which it causes is not a source of pleasure. For although a man who is sorry for the sufferings of others deserves praise for his charity, nevertheless, if his pity is genuine, he would prefer that there should be no cause for his sorrow. If the impossible could happen and kindness were unkind, a man whose sense of pity was true and sincere might want others to suffer so that he could pity them. Sorrow may therefore be commendable but never desirable. For it is powerless to stab you, Lord God, and this is why the love you bear for our souls and the compassion you show for them are pure and unalloyed, far purer than the love and pity which we feel ourselves. But *who can prove himself worthy of such a calling?*²¹

However, in those unhappy days I enjoyed the pangs of sorrow. I always looked for things to wring my heart and the more tears an actor caused me to shed by his performance on the stage, even though he was portraying the imaginary distress of others, the more delightful and attractive I found it. Was it any wonder that I, the unhappy sheep who strayed from your flock, impatient of your shepherding, became infected with a loathsome mange? Hence my love of things which made me sad. I did not seek the kind of sorrow which would wound me deeply, for I had no wish to endure the sufferings which I saw on the stage; but I enjoyed fables and fictions, which could only graze the skin. But where the fingers scratch, the skin becomes inflamed. It swells and festers with hideous pus. And the same happened to me. Could the life I led be called true life, my God?

3

Yet all the while, far above, your mercy hovered faithfully about me. I exhausted myself in depravity, in the pursuit of an unholy curiosity. I deserted you and sank to the bottom-most depths of scepticism and the mockery of devil-worship. My sins were a sacrifice to the devil, and for all of them you chastised me. I defied you even so far as to relish the thought of lust, and gratify it too, within the walls of your church during the celebration of your mysteries. For such a deed I deserved to pluck the fruit of death, and you punished me for it with a heavy lash. But, compared with my guilt, the penalty was nothing. How infinite is your mercy, my God! You are my Refuge from the terrible dangers amongst which I wandered, head on high, intent upon withdrawing still further from you. I loved my own way, not yours, but it was a truant's freedom that I loved.

Besides these pursuits I was also studying for the law. Such ambition was held to be honourable and I determined to succeed in it. The more unscrupulous I was, the greater my reputation was likely to be, for men are so blind that they even take pride in their blindness. By now I was at the top of the school of rhetoric. I was pleased with my superior status and swollen with conceit. All the same, as you well know, Lord, I behaved far more quietly than the 'Wreckers', a title of ferocious devilry which the fashionable set chose for themselves. I had nothing whatever to do with their outbursts of violence, but I lived amongst them, feeling a perverse sense of shame because I was not like them. I kept company with them and there were times when I found their friendship a pleasure, but I always had a horror of what they did when they lived up to their name. Without provocation they would set upon some timid newcomer, gratuitously affronting his sense of decency for their own amusement and using it as fodder for their spiteful jests. This was the devil's own behaviour or not far different. 'Wreckers' was a fit name for them, for they were already adrift and total wrecks themselves. The mockery and trickery which they loved to practise on others was a secret snare of the devil, by which they were mocked and tricked themselves.

4

These were the companions with whom I studied the art of eloquence at that impressionable age. It was my ambition to be a good speaker, for the unhallowed and inane purpose of gratifying human vanity. The prescribed course of study brought me to a work by an author named Cicero, whose writing nearly everyone admires, if not the spirit of it. The title of the book is *Hortensius* and it recommends the reader to study philosophy. It altered my outlook on life. It changed my prayers to you, O Lord, and provided me with new hopes and aspirations. All my empty dreams suddenly lost their charm and my heart began to throb with a bewildering passion for the wisdom of eternal truth. I began to climb out of the depths to which I had sunk, in order to return to you. For I did not use the book as a whetstone to sharpen my tongue. It was not the style of it but the contents which won me over, and yet the allowance which my mother paid me was supposed to be spent on putting an edge on my tongue. I was now in my nineteenth year and she supported me, because my father had died two years before.

My God, how I burned with longing to have wings to carry me back to you, away from all earthly things, although I had no idea what you would do with me! For *yours is the wisdom*.²² In Greek the word 'philosophy' means 'love of wisdom', and it was with this love that the *Hortensius* inflamed me. There are people for whom philosophy is a means of misleading others, for they misuse its great name, its attractions, and its integrity to give colour and gloss to their own errors. Most of these so-called philosophers who lived in Cicero's time and before are noted in the book. He shows them up in their true colours and makes quite clear how wholesome is the admonition which the Holy Spirit gives in the words of your good and true servant, Paul: *Take care not to let anyone cheat you with his philosophizings, with empty fantasies drawn from human tradition, from worldly principles; they were never Christ's teaching. In Christ the whole plenitude of Deity is embodied and dwells in him*.²³

But, O Light of my heart, you know that at that time, although Paul's words were not known to me, the only thing that pleased me in Cicero's book was his advice not simply to admire one or another of the schools of philosophy, but to love wisdom itself, whatever it might be, and to search for it, pursue it, hold it, and embrace it firmly. These were the words which excited me and set me burning with fire, and the only check to this blaze of enthusiasm was that they made no mention of the name of Christ. For by your mercy, Lord, from the time when my mother fed me at the breast my infant heart had been suckled dutifully on his name, the name of your Son, my Saviour. Deep inside my heart his name remained, and nothing could entirely captivate me, however learned, however neatly expressed, however true it might be, unless his name were in it.

5

So I made up my mind to examine the holy Scriptures and see what kind of books they were. I discovered something that was at once beyond the understanding of the proud and hidden from the eyes of children. Its gait was humble, but the heights it reached were sublime. It was enfolded in mysteries, and I was not the kind of man to enter into it or bow my head to follow where it led. But these were not the feelings I had when I first read the Scriptures. To me they seemed quite unworthy of comparison with the stately prose of Cicero, because I had too much conceit to accept their simplicity and not enough insight to penetrate their depths. It is surely true that as the child grows these books grow with him. But I was too proud to call myself a child. I was inflated with self-esteem, which made me think myself a great man.

6

I fell in with a set of sensualists, men with glib tongues who ranted and raved and had the snares of the devil in their mouths. They baited the traps by confusing the syllables of the names of God the Father, God the Son Our Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, who comforts us. These names were always on the tips of their tongues, but only as sounds which they mouthed aloud, for in their hearts they had no inkling of the truth. Yet 'Truth and truth alone' was the motto which they repeated to me again and again, although the truth was nowhere to be found in them. All that they said was false, both what they said about you, who truly are the Truth, and what they said about this world and its first principles, which were your creation. But I ought not to have been content with what the philosophers said about such things, even when they spoke the truth. I should have passed beyond them for love of you, my supreme Father, my good Father, in whom all beauty has its source.

Truth! Truth! How the very marrow of my soul within me yearned for it as they dinned it in my ears over and over again! To them it was no more than a name to be voiced or a word to be read in their libraries of huge books. But while my hunger was for you, for Truth itself, these were the dishes on which they served me up the sun and the moon, beautiful works of yours but still only your works, not you yourself nor even the greatest of your created things.²⁴ For your spiritual works are greater than these material things, however brightly they may shine in the sky.

But my hunger and thirst were not even for the greatest of your works, but for you, my God, because you are Truth itself *with whom there can be no change, no swerving from your course*.²⁵ Yet the dishes they set before me were still loaded with dazzling fantasies, illusions with which the eye deceives the mind. It would have been better to love the sun itself, which at least is real as far as we can see. But I gulped down this food, because I thought that it was you. I had no relish for it, because the taste it left in my mouth was not the taste of truth—it could not be, for it was not you but an empty sham. And it did not nourish me, but starved me all the more. The food we dream of is very like the food we eat when we are awake, but it does not nourish because it is only a dream. Yet the things they gave me to eat were not in the least like you, as now I know since you have spoken to me. They were dream-substances, mock realities, far less true than the real things which we see with the sight of our eyes in the sky or on the earth. These things are seen by bird and beast as well as by ourselves, and they are far more certain than any image we conceive of them. And in turn we can picture them to ourselves with greater certainty than the vaster, infinite things which we surmise from them. Such things have no existence at all, but they were the visionary foods on which I was then fed but not sustained.

But you, O God whom I love and on whom I lean in weakness so that I may be strong, you are not the sun and the moon and the stars, even though we see these bodies in the heavens; nor are you those other bodies which we do not see in the sky, for you created them and, in your reckoning, they are not even among the greatest of your works. How far, then, must you really be from those fantasies of mine, those imaginary material things which do not exist at all! The images we form in our mind's eyes, when we picture things that really do exist, are far better founded than these inventions; and the things themselves are still more certain than the images we form of them. But you are not these things. Neither are you the soul, which is the life of bodies and, since it gives them life, must be better and more certain than they are themselves. But you are the life of souls, the life of lives. You live, O Life of my soul, because you are life itself, immutable.

Where were you in those days? How far away from me? I was wandering far from you and I was not even allowed to eat the husks on which I fed the swine. For surely the fables of the poets and the penmen are better than the traps which those impostors set! There is certainly

more to be gained from verses and poems and tales like the flight of Medea than from their stories of the five elements disguised in various ways because of the five dens of darkness. These things simply do not exist and they are death to those who believe in them. Verses and poems can provide real food for thought, but although I used to recite verses about Medea's flight through the air, I never maintained that they were true; and I never believed the poems which I heard others recite. But I did believe the tales which these men told.

These were the stages of my pitiful fall into the depths of hell, as I struggled and strained for lack of the truth. My God, you had mercy on me even before I had confessed to you; but I now confess that all this was because I tried to find you, not through the understanding of the mind, by which you meant us to be superior to the beasts, but through the senses of the flesh. Yet you were deeper than my inmost understanding and higher than the topmost height that I could reach. I had blundered upon that woman in Solomon's parable who, ignorant and unabashed, sat at her door and said *Stolen waters are sweetest, and bread is better eating when there is none to see.*²⁶ She inveigled me because she found me living in the outer world that lay before my eyes, the eyes of the flesh, and dwelling upon the food which they provided for my mind.

7

There is another reality besides this, though I knew nothing of it. My own specious reasoning induced me to give in to the sly arguments of fools who asked me what was the origin of evil, whether God was confined to the limits of a bodily shape, whether he had hair and nails, and whether men could be called just if they had more than one wife at the same time, or killed other men, or sacrificed living animals. My ignorance was so great that these questions troubled me, and while I thought I was approaching the truth, I was only departing the further from it. I did not know that evil is nothing but the removal of good until finally no good remains. How could I see this when with the sight of my eyes I saw no more than material things and with the sight of my mind no more than their images? I did not know that God is a spirit, a being without bulk and without limbs defined in length and breadth. For bulk is less in the part than in the whole, and if it is infinite, it is less in any part of it which can be defined within fixed limits than it is in its infinity. It cannot, therefore, be everywhere entirely whole, as a spirit is and as God is. Nor had I the least notion what it is in us that gives us our being, or what the Scriptures mean when they say that we are made in God's image.

I knew nothing of the true underlying justice which judges, not according to convention, but according to the truly equitable law of Almighty God. This is the law by which each age and place forms rules of conduct best suited to itself, although the law itself is always and everywhere the same and does not differ from place to place or from age to age. I did not see that by the sanction of this law Abraham and Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and the others whom God praised were just men, although they have been reckoned sinners by men who are not qualified to judge, for they try them by human standards and assess all the rights and wrongs of the human race by the measure of their own customs. Anyone who does this behaves like a man who knows nothing about armour and cannot tell which piece is meant for which part of the body, so that he tries to cover his head with a shin-piece and fix a helmet on his foot, and then complains because they will not fit; or like a shopkeeper who is allowed to sell his wares in the morning, but grumbles because the afternoon is a public holiday and he is not allowed to trade; or like a man who sees one of the servants in a house handling things which the cellar-man is not allowed to touch, or finds something being done in the stableyard which is not allowed in the dining-room, and is then indignant because the members of the household, living together in one house, are not all given the same privileges in all parts of the house.

The people of whom I am speaking have the same sort of grievance when they hear that things which good men could do without sin in days gone by are not permitted in ours, and that God gave them one commandment and has given us another. He has done this because the times have demanded it, although men were subject to the same justice in those days as we are in these. Yet those who complain about this understand that when we are dealing with a single man, a single day, or a single house, each part of the whole has a different function suited to it. What may be done at one time of day is not allowed at the next, and what may be done, or must be done, in one room is forbidden and punished in another. This does not mean that justice is erratic or variable, but that the times over which it presides are not always the same, for it is the nature of time to change. Man's life on earth is short and he cannot, by his own perception, see the connexion between the conditions of earlier times and of other nations, which he has not experienced himself, and those of his own times, which are familiar to him. But when only one individual, one day, or one house is concerned, he can easily see what is suitable for each part of the whole and for each member of the household, and what must be done at which times and places. These things he accepts: but with the habits of other ages he finds fault.

I knew nothing of this at that time. I was quite unconscious of it, quite blind to it, although it stared me in the face. When I composed verses, I could not fit any foot in any position that I pleased. Each metre was differently scanned and I could not put the same foot in every position in the same line. And yet the art of poetry, by which I composed, does not vary from one line to another: it is the same for all alike. But I did not discern that justice, which those good and holy men obeyed, in a far more perfect and sublime way than poetry contains in itself at one and the same time all the principles which it prescribes, without discrepancy; although, as times change, it prescribes and apportions them, not all at once, but according to the needs of the times. Blind to this, I found fault with the holy patriarchs not only because, in their own day, they acted as God commanded and inspired them, but also because they predicted the future as he revealed it to them.

8

Surely it is never wrong at any time or in any place for a man to *love God with his whole heart and his whole soul and his whole mind* and to *love his neighbour as himself*?²⁷ Sins against nature, therefore, like the sin of Sodom, are abominable and deserve punishment wherever and whenever they are committed. If all nations committed them, all alike would be held guilty of the same charge in God's law, for our Maker did not prescribe that we should use each other in this way. In fact the relationship which we ought to have with God is itself violated when our nature, of which he is the Author, is desecrated by perverted lust.

On the other hand, offences against human codes of conduct vary according to differences of custom, so that no one, whether he is a native or a foreigner, may, to suit his own pleasure, violate the conventions established by the customary usage or the law of the community or the state. For any part that is out of keeping with the whole is at fault. But if God commands a nation to do something contrary to its customs or constitutions, it must be done even if it has never been done in that country before. If it is a practice which has been discontinued, it must be resumed, and if it was not a law before, it must be enacted. In his own kingdom a king has the right to make orders which neither he nor any other has ever made before. Obedience to his orders is not against the common interest of the community; in fact, if they were disobeyed, the common interest would suffer, because it is the general agreement in human communities that the ruler is obeyed. How much more right, then, has God to give commands, since he is the Ruler of all creation and all his creatures must obey his commandments without demur! For all

must yield to God just as, in the government of human society, the lesser authority must yield to the greater.

With sins of violence the case is the same as with sins against nature. Here the impulse is to injure others, either by word or by deed, but by whichever means it is done, there are various reasons for doing it. A man may injure his enemy for the sake of revenge; a robber may assault a traveller to secure for himself something that is not his own; or a man may attack someone whom he fears in order to avoid danger to himself. Or the injury may be done from envy, which will cause an unhappy man to harm another more fortunate than himself or a rich man to harm someone whose rivalry he fears for the future or already resents. Again, it may be done for the sheer joy of seeing others suffer, as is the case with those who watch gladiators or make fun of other people and jeer at them.

These are the main categories of sin. They are hatched from the lust for power, from gratification of the eye, and from gratification of corrupt nature—from one or two of these or from all three together. Because of them, O God most high, most sweet, our lives offend against your *ten-stringed harp*,²⁸ your commandments, the three which proclaim our duty to you and the seven which proclaim our duty to men.

But how can sins of vice be against you, since you cannot be marred by perversion? How can sins of violence be against you, since nothing can injure you? Your punishments are for the sins which men commit against themselves, because although they sin against you, they do wrong to their own souls and their malice is self-betrayed.²⁹ They corrupt and pervert their own nature, which you made and for which you shaped the rules, either by making wrong use of the things which you allow, or by becoming inflamed with passion to make unnatural use of things which you do not allow. Or else their guilt consists in raving against you in their hearts and with their tongues and *kicking against the goad*,³⁰ or in playing havoc with the restrictions of human society and brazenly exulting in private feuds and factions, each according to his fancies or his fads.

This is what happens, O Fountain of life, when we abandon you, who are the one true Creator of all that ever was or is, and each of us proudly sets his heart on some one part of your creation instead of on the whole. So it is by the path of meekness and devotion that we must return to you. You rid us of our evil habits and forgive our sins when we confess to you. You *listen to the groans of the prisoners*³¹ and free us from the chains which we have forged for ourselves. This you do for us unless we toss our heads against you in the illusion of liberty and in our greed for gain, at the risk of losing all, love our own good better than you yourself, who are the common good of all.

9

Among these vices and crimes and all the endless ways in which men do wrong there are also the sins of those who follow the right path but go astray. By the rule of perfection these lapses are condemned, if we judge them aright, but the sinners may yet be praised, for they give promise of better fruit to come, like the young shoots which later bear the ears of corn. Sometimes we also do things which have every appearance of being sins against nature or against our fellow men, but are not sins because they offend neither you, the Lord our God, nor the community in which we live. For example, a man may amass a store of goods to meet the needs of life or some contingency, but it does not necessarily follow that he is a miser. Or he may be punished by those whose duty it is to correct misdemeanours, but it is by no means certain that they do it out of wanton cruelty. Many of the things we do may therefore seem wrong to men but are approved in the light of your knowledge, and many which men applaud are condemned in your

eyes. This is because the appearance of what we do is often different from the intention with which we do it, and the circumstances at the time may not be clear.

But when you suddenly command us to do something strange and unforeseen, even if you had previously forbidden it, none can doubt that the command must be obeyed, even though, for the time being, you may conceal the reason for it and it may conflict with the established rule of custom in some forms of society; for no society is right and good unless it obeys you. But happy are they who know that the commandment was yours. For all that your servants do is done as an example of what is needed for the present or as a sign of what is yet to come.

10

I was ignorant of this and derided those holy servants and prophets of yours. But all that I achieved by deriding them was to earn your derision for myself, for I was gradually led to believe such nonsense as that a fig wept when it was plucked, and that the tree which bore it shed tears of mother's milk. But if some sanctified member of the sect were to eat the fig—someone else, of course, would have committed the sin of plucking it—he would digest it and breathe it out again in the form of angels or even as particles of God, retching them up as he groaned in prayer. These particles of the true and supreme God were supposed to be imprisoned in the fruit and could only be released by means of the stomach and teeth of one of the elect. I was foolish enough to believe that we should show more kindness to the fruits of the earth than to mankind, for whose use they were intended. If a starving man, not a Manichee, were to beg for a mouthful, they thought it a crime worthy of mortal punishment to give him one.

11

But *you sent down your help from above*³² and rescued my soul from the depths of this darkness because my mother, your faithful servant, wept to you for me, shedding more tears for my spiritual death than other mothers shed for the bodily death of a son. For in her faith and in the spirit which she had from you she looked on me as dead. You heard her and did not despise the tears which streamed down and watered the earth in every place where she bowed her head in prayer. You heard her, for how else can I explain the dream with which you consoled her, so that she agreed to live with me and eat at the same table in our home? Lately she had refused to do this, because she loathed and shunned the blasphemy of my false beliefs.

She dreamed that she was standing on a wooden rule, and coming towards her in a halo of splendour she saw a young man who smiled at her in joy, although she herself was sad and quite consumed with grief. He asked her the reason for her sorrow and her daily tears, not because he did not know, but because he had something to tell her, for this is what happens in visions. When she replied that her tears were for the soul I had lost, he told her to take heart for, if she looked carefully, she would see that where she was, there also was I. And when she looked, she saw me standing beside her on the same rule.

Where could this dream have come from, unless it was that you listened to the prayer of her heart? For your goodness is almighty; you take good care of each of us as if you had no others in your care, and you look after all as you look after each. And surely it was for the same reason that, when she told me of the dream and I tried to interpret it as a message that she need not despair of being one day such as I was then, she said at once and without hesitation 'No! He did not say "Where he is, you are", but "Where you are, he is".'

I have often said before and, to the best of my memory, I now declare to you, Lord, that I was much moved by this answer, which you gave me through my mother. She was not disturbed by my interpretation of her dream, plausible though it was, but quickly saw the true meaning,

which I had not seen until she spoke. I was more deeply moved by this than by the dream itself, in which the joy for which this devout woman had still so long to wait was foretold so long before to comfort her in the time of her distress. For nearly nine years were yet to come during which I wallowed deep in the mire and the darkness of delusion. Often I tried to lift myself, only to plunge the deeper. Yet all the time this chaste, devout, and prudent woman, a widow such as is close to your heart, never ceased to pray at all hours and to offer you the tears she shed for me. The dream had given new spirit to her hope, but she gave no rest to her sighs and her tears. *Her prayers reached your presence*³³ and yet you still left me to twist and turn in the dark.

12

I remember that in the meantime you gave her another answer to her prayers, though there is much besides this that escapes my memory and much too that I must omit, because I am in haste to pass on to other things, which I am more anxious to confess to you.

This other answer you gave her through the mouth of one of your priests, a bishop who had lived his life in the Church and was well versed in the Scriptures. My mother asked him, as a favour, to have a talk with me, so that he might refute my errors, drive the evil out of my mind, and replace it with good. He often did this when he found suitable pupils, but he refused to do it for me—a wise decision, as I afterwards realized. He told her that I was still unripe for instruction because, as she had told him, I was brimming over with the novelty of the heresy and had already upset a great many simple people with my casuistry. ‘Leave him alone’, he said. ‘Just pray to God for him. From his own reading he will discover his mistakes and the depth of his profanity.’

At the same time he told her that when he was a child his misguided mother had handed him over to the Manichees. He had not only read almost all their books, but had also made copies of them, and even though no one argued the case with him or put him right, he had seen for himself that he ought to have nothing to do with the sect; and accordingly he had left it. Even after she had heard this my mother still would not be pacified, but persisted all the more with her tears and her entreaties that he should see me and discuss the matter. At last he grew impatient and said ‘Leave me and go in peace. It cannot be that the son of these tears should be lost.’

In later years, as we walked together, she used to say that she accepted these words as a message from heaven.

Notes

1. Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes* I, 26.
2. Terence, *Eunuchus* III, 5.
3. Virgil, *Aeneid* I, 37–49.
4. See Ps. 85: 15 (86: 15).
5. Ps. 26: 8 (27: 8).
6. Matt. 19: 14.
7. I Cor. 7: 28.
8. I Cor. 7: 1.
9. I Cor. 7:32, 33.
10. Matt. 19: 12.
11. See Ps. 93: 20 (94: 20).
12. See Deut. 32: 39.

13. See Ps. 72: 7 (73: 7).
14. Ps. 63: 11 (64: 10).
15. Sallust, *Catilina* XVI.
16. Sallust, *Catilina* XVI.
17. Ps. 115: 12 (116: 12).
18. Rom. 6: 21.
19. Ps. 18: 13 (19: 12).
20. Matt. 25: 21.
21. II Cor. 2: 16.
22. Job 12: 13.
23. Col. 2: 8, 9.
24. Saint Augustine is here speaking of the Manichees, for whom astronomy was a part of theology.
25. James I: 17.
26. Prov. 9: 17.
27. Matt. 22: 37, 39.
28. Ps. 143: 9 (144: 9)
29. See Ps. 26: 12 (27: 12).
30. Acts, 9:5.
31. Ps. 101: 21 (102: 20).
32. Ps. 143: 7 (144: 7).
33. Ps. 87: 3 (88: 2).

Reading 12

THE KORAN

Introduction by Michael Levin

In the year 610 A.D., a man named Muhammed was praying alone in a cave just outside the city of Mecca, in what is now Saudi Arabia. Suddenly he heard a great voice command him to “read!” Mystified Muhammed asked “what should I read?” The voice answered, “read that which man knew not.” Then Muhammed turned and saw who was speaking to him—the angel Gabriel (or, in Arabic, Jibrail), who told Muhammed that God had chosen him to receive the last and greatest of divine revelations. When Muhammed emerged from the cave, he had the words of the Koran (which means “reading” or “recitation”) inscribed in his heart. Muhammed began to preach the message of God (Allah) in Mecca, and quickly won many converts. Thus was born the religion of Islam.

The Koran is the sacred text for Moslems, as the Bible is for Jews and Christians. Like the Bible, the Koran is a source of moral instruction and practical laws for society, as well as a guide for getting into Heaven. And also like the Bible, the Koran contains beautiful poetry. In fact, the poetic nature of the Koran may be its most confusing aspect for those reading it for the first time. The Koran has little narrative structure; stories and poetic images appear side-by-side with discussions of legal problems. This may seem strange, but new readers may also be surprised by how many similarities there are between the Koran and the Bible. The values and ideals of Islam derive from the Judeo-Christian tradition, a fact which should become clear upon reading the Koran.

The Koran is divided into chapters, called “suras,” each with its own title. We have chosen the first two suras, “The Opening” and “The Cow.” The first is only a few lines long, but it is important because it encapsulates many of the basics of Islam. We are told here about Allah—who He is, and what His relationship with humanity is like. Compare this vision of God with the God of the Old Testament, or with Jesus as he is described in the Gospel of Matthew. Does it seem familiar?

The second sura is much longer, and contains a great deal of information. One of the key themes of this section is the relationship between Islam and the two older religions, Judaism and Christianity. Jews and Christians are often addressed directly—what are they told? Also, note how many references to the Hebrew Scriptures there are in this sura. What purpose do they serve in the text? Incidentally, the title of this sura is a reference to the Golden Calf which the Israelites worshipped at the foot of Mount Sinai, when they lost faith in God (Exodus 32). In this sura there is a different account of this event. What point is being made about the Israelites?

Another important theme in the second sura is the question of social laws and how to be a righteous person. When reading this section, keep in mind the laws described in the Book of Exodus, as well as Jesus' explication of the Mosaic laws in the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew. What is similar, and what is different? Again, those encountering Islam for the first time may be surprised at how familiar much of it seems. In the modern Western world, Islam has received a great deal of bad press. Hopefully, the more we read about Islam, the less alien it will seem. Today Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the world. As you read in the Koran, ask yourself what makes this religion so appealing to so many people?

THE KORAN INTERPRETED

I

The Opening

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise belongs to God, the Lord of all Being,
the All-merciful, the All-compassionate,
the master of the Day of Doom.

Thee only we serve; to Thee alone we pray for succour.
Guide us in the straight path,
the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,
not of those against whom Thou art wrathful,
nor of those who are astray.

5

II

The Cow

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Alif Lam Mim

That is the Book, wherein is no doubt,
a guidance to the godfearing
who believe in the Unseen, and perform the prayer,
and expend of that We have provided them;
who believe in what has been sent down to thee
and what has been sent down before thee,
and have faith in the Hereafter;
those are upon guidance from their Lord,
those are the ones who prosper.

As for the unbelievers, alike it is to them
whether thou hast warned them or hast not warned them,
they do not believe.

God has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing,
and on their eyes is a covering,
and there awaits them a mighty chastisement.

And some men there are who say,
'We believe in God and the Last Day';
but they are not believers.

They would trick God and the believers,
and only themselves they deceive,
and they are not aware.

In their hearts is a sickness,
and God has increased their sickness,
and there awaits them a painful chastisement
for that they have cried lies.

When it is said to them, 'Do not corruption in the land',
they say, 'We are only ones that put things right.'

Truly, they are the workers of corruption
but they are not aware.

When it is said to them, 'Believe as the people believe',
they say, 'Shall we believe, as fools believe?'

Truly, they are the foolish ones,
but they do not know.

When they meet those who believe, they say, 'We believe';
but when they go privily to their Satans, they say,
'We are with you; we were only mocking.'

God shall mock them, and shall lead them on
blindly wandering in their insolence.

Those are they that have bought error
at the price of guidance,

and their commerce has not profited them,
and they are not right-guided.

The likeness of them is as the likeness of a man
who kindled a fire, and when it lit all about him
God took away their light, and left them in darkness
unseeing,

deaf, dumb, blind—

so they shall not return;

or as a cloudburst out of heaven

in which is darkness, and thunder, and lightning—

they put their fingers in their ears

against the thunderclaps, fearful of death;

and God encompasses the unbelievers;

the lightning wellnigh snatches away their sight;

5

10

15

whensoever it gives them light, they walk in it,
 and when the darkness is over them, they halt;
 had God willed, He would have taken away
 their hearing and their sight.
 Truly, God is powerful over everything.

O you men, serve your Lord Who created you,
 and those that were before you; haply so
 you will be godfearing;
 who assigned to you the earth for a couch,
 and heaven for an edifice, and sent down
 out of heaven water, wherewith He brought forth
 fruits for your provision; so set not up
 compeers to God wittingly.
 And if you are in doubt concerning that We have
 sent down on Our servant, then bring a sura
 like it, and call your witnesses, apart from
 God, if you are truthful.
 And if you do not—and you will not—then
 fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones,
 prepared for unbelievers.

20

Give thou good tidings to those who believe
 and do deeds of righteousness, that for them
 await gardens underneath which rivers flow;
 whensoever they are provided with fruits therefrom
 they shall say, 'This is what wherewithal
 we were provided before'; that they shall be
 given in perfect semblance; and there
 for them shall be spouses purified; therein
 they shall dwell forever.

God is not ashamed to strike a similitude
 even of a gnat, or aught above it.
 As for the believers, they know it is the truth
 from their Lord; but as for unbelievers,
 they say, 'What did God desire by this
 for a similitude?' Thereby He leads
 many astray, and thereby He guides
 many; and thereby He leads none astray
 save the ungodly
 such as break the covenant of God
 after its solemn binding, and such as cut
 what God has commanded should be joined,
 and such as do corruption in the land—
 they shall be the losers.

25

How do you disbelieve in God, seeing you were dead
and He gave you life, then He shall make you dead,
then He shall give you life, then unto Him
you shall be returned?

It is He who created for you all that is
in the earth, then He lifted Himself to heaven
and levelled them seven heavens; and He has
knowledge of everything.

And when thy Lord said to the angels,
'I am setting the earth a viceroy.'

They said, 'What, wilt Thou set therein one
who will do corruption there, and shed blood,
while We proclaim Thy praise and call Thee Holy?'

He said, 'Assuredly I know
that you know not.'

And He taught Adam the names, all of them;
then He presented them unto the angels
and said, 'Now tell Me the names of these,
if you speak truly.'

They said, "Glory be to Thee! We know not
save what Thou hast taught us. Surely Thou art
the All-knowing, the All-wise."

He said, 'Adam, tell them their names.'

And when he had told them their names

He said, 'Did I not tell you I know
the unseen things of the heavens and earth?

And I know what things you reveal, and
what you were hiding.'

And when We said to the angels, 'Bow
yourselves to Adam'; so they bowed
themselves, save Iblis; he refused,
and waxed proud, and so he became
one of the unbelievers.

And We said, 'Adam, dwell thou, and thy wife,
in the Garden, and eat thereof easefully
where you desire; but draw not nigh this tree,
lest you be evildoers.'

Then Satan caused them to slip therefrom
and brought them out of that they were in;
and We said, 'Get you all down, each
of you an enemy of each; and in
the earth a sojourn shall be yours, and
enjoyment for a time.'

Thereafter Adam received certain words
from his Lord, and He turned towards him;
truly He turns, and is All-compassionate.

We said, 'Get you down out of it, all together;
yet there shall come to you guidance from Me,
and whosoever follows My guidance,
no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.
As for the unbelievers who cry lies to Our signs,
those shall be the inhabitants of the Fire,
therein dwelling forever.'

Children of Israel, remember My blessing
wherewith I blessed you, and fulfil My covenant
and I shall fulfil your covenant; and have awe of Me.
And believe in that I have sent down, confirming
that which is with you, and be not the first
to disbelieve in it. And sell not My signs
for a little price; and fear you Me.
And do not confound the truth with vanity,
and do not conceal the truth wittingly.
And perform the prayer, and pay the alms,
and how with those that bow. Will you bid
others to piety, and forget yourselves
while you recite the Book? Do you not understand?
Seek you help in patience and prayer,
for grievous it is, save to the humble
who reckon that they shall meet their Lord
and that unto Him they are returning.

40

Children of Israel, remember My blessing
wherewith I blessed you, and that I
have preferred you above all beings;
and beware of a day when no soul for another
shall give satisfaction, and no intercession
shall be accepted from it, nor any counterpoise
be taken, neither shall they be helped.

45

And when We delivered you from the folk of Pharaoh
who were visiting you with evil chastisement,
slaughtering your sons, and sparing your women;
and in that was a grievous trial from your Lord.
And when We divided for you the sea
and delivered you, and drowned Pharaoh's folk
while you were beholding.
And when We appointed with Moses forty nights
then you took to yourselves the Calf after him
and you were evildoers;
then We pardoned you after that, that haply
you should be thankful.

And when We gave to Moses the Book
and the Salvation, that haply
you should be guided.

And when Moses said to his people,
'My people, you have done wrong against yourselves
by your taking the Calf; now turn to your Creator
and slay one another. That will be better for you
in your Creator's sight, and He will turn to you;
truly He turns, and is All-compassionate.'
And when you said, 'Moses, we will not believe thee
till we see God openly'; and the thunderbolt took you
while you were beholding.
Then We raised you up after you were dead, that haply
you should be thankful.
And We outspread the cloud to overshadow you,
and We sent down manna and quails upon you:
'Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you.
And they worked no wrong upon Us, but
themselves they wronged.

And when We said, 'Enter this township,
and eat easefully of it wherever you will,
and enter in at the gate, prostrating,
and say, Unburdening; We will forgive you
your transgressions, and increase the good-doers.'

Then the evildoers substituted a saying
other than that which had been said to them;
so We sent down upon the evildoers
wrath out of heaven for their ungodliness.

And when Moses sought water for his people,
so We said, 'Strike with thy staff the rock';
and there gushed forth from it twelve fountains;
all the people knew now their drinking-place.
'Eat and drink of God's providing, and
mischief not in the earth, doing corruption.'

And when you said, 'Moses, we will not endure
one sort of food; pray to thy Lord for us, that He
may bring forth for us of that the earth produces—
green herbs, cucumbers, corn, lentils, onions.'
He said, 'Would you have in exchange what is meaner
for what is better? Get you down to Egypt;
you shall have there that you demanded.'

And abasement and poverty were pitched upon them,
and they were laden with the burden of God's anger;
that, because they had disbelieved the signs of God
and slain the Prophets unrightfully; that,
because they disobeyed, and were transgressors.
Surely they that believe, and those of Jewry,

and the Christians, and those Sabaeans,
 whoso believes in God and the Last Day, and works
 righteousness—their wage awaits them with their Lord,
 and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.

And when We took compact with you, and raised above you
 the Mount: 'Take forcefully what We have given you, and
 remember what is in it; haply you shall be godfearing.'

60

Then you turned away thereafter, and but for the bounty
 and mercy of God towards you, you had been of the losers.

And well you know there were those among you
 that transgressed the Sabbath, and We said to them,
 'Be you apes, miserably slinking!'

And We made it a punishment exemplary
 for all the former times and for the latter,
 and an admonition to such as are godfearing.

And when Moses said to his people,

'God commands you to sacrifice a cow.' They said,

'Dost thou take us in mockery?' He said,

'I take refuge with God, lest I should be

one of the ignorant.' They said, 'Pray to thy Lord
 for us, that He may make clear to us what she may be.'

He said, 'He says she is a cow neither old, nor virgin,
 middling between the two; so do that you are bidden.'

They said, 'Pray to thy Lord for us, that He make clear
 to us what her colour may be.' He said, 'He says

65

she shall be a golden cow, bright her colour,
 gladdening the beholders.' They said, 'Pray

to thy Lord for us, that He make clear to us
 what she may be; cows are much alike to us;
 and, if God will, we shall then be guided.'

He said, 'He says she shall be a cow not broken
 to plough the earth or to water the tillage,

one kept secure, with no blemish on her.' They said,

'Now thou hast brought the truth'; and therefore they
 sacrificed her, a thing they had scarcely done.

And when you killed a living soul, and disputed
 thereon—and God disclosed what you were hiding—

so We said, 'Smite him with part of it'; even so

God brings to life the dead, and He shows you

His signs, that haply you may have understanding.

Then your hearts became hardened thereafter

and are like stones, or even yet harder;

for there are stones from which rivers come gushing,

and others split, so that water issues from them,

and others crash down in the fear of God.

And God is not heedless of the things you do.

Are you then so eager that they should believe you,
 seeing there is a party of them that heard
 God's word, and then tampered with it, and that
 after they had comprehended it, wittingly?
 And when they meet those who believe, they say
 'We believe'; and when they go privily
 one to another, they say, 'Do you speak to them
 of what God has revealed to you, that they may
 thereby dispute with you before your Lord?
 Have you no understanding?'
 Know they not that God knows what they keep secret
 and what they publish?

And some there are of them that are common folk
 not knowing the Book, but only fancies
 and mere conjectures. So woe to those
 who write the Book with their hands, then say,
 'This is from God,' that they may sell it
 for a little price; so woe to them
 for what their hands have written, and woe
 to them for their earnings.

And they say, 'The Fire shall not touch us
 save a number of days.' Say: 'Have you taken
 with God a covenant? God will not fail in His
 covenant; or say you things against God
 of which you know nothing?

Not so; whoso earns evil, and is encompassed by
 his transgression—those are the inhabitants of the Fire;
 there they shall dwell forever.

And those that believe, and do deeds of
 righteousness—those are the inhabitants of Paradise;
 there they shall dwell forever.'

And when We took compact with the Children of Israel:
 'You shall not serve any save God;
 and to be good to parents, and the near kinsman,
 and to orphans, and to the needy;
 and speak good to men, and perform the prayer,
 and pay the alms.' Then you turned away,
 all but a few of you, swerving aside.

And when We took compact with you: 'You shall not
 shed your own blood, neither expel your own
 from your habitations'; then you confirmed it
 and yourselves bore witness. Then there you are
 killing one another, and expelling a party of you
 from their habitations, conspiring against them
 in sin and enmity; and if they come to you
 as captives, you ransom them; yet their expulsion

was forbidden you. What, do you believe
in part of the Book, and disbelieve in part?
What shall be the recompense of those of you who
do that, but degradation in the present life,
and on the Day of Resurrection to be returned
unto the most terrible of chastisement?

And God is not heedless of the things you do.
Those who have purchased the present life at the price
of the world to come—for them the chastisement
shall not be lightened, neither shall they be helped.

80

And We gave to Moses the Book, and after him
sent succeeding Messengers; and We gave Jesus
son of Mary the clear signs, and confirmed him
with the Holy Spirit; and whensoever
there came to you a Messenger with that your souls
had not desire for, did you become arrogant,
and some cry lies to, and some slay?

And they say, 'Our hearts are uncircumcised.'
Nay, but God has cursed them for their unbelief;
little will they believe. When there came to them
a Book from God, confirming what was with them—
and they aforesometimes prayed for victory
over the unbelievers—when there came to them
that they recognized, they disbelieved in it;
and the curse of God is on the unbelievers.
Evil is the thing they have sold themselves for,
disbelieving in that which God sent down,
grudging that God should send down of His bounty
on whomsoever He will of His servants,
and they were laden with anger upon anger;
and for unbelievers awaits a humbling chastisement.
And when they were told, 'Believe in that
God has sent down,' they said, 'We believe
in what was sent down on us'; and they disbelieve
in what is beyond that, yet it is the truth
confirming what is with them. Say: 'Why then
were you slaying the Prophets of God
in former time, if you were believers?'

85

And Moses came to you with the clear signs,
then you took to yourselves the Calf after him
and you were evildoers.
And when We took compact with you, and raised over you
the Mount: 'Take forcefully what We have given you
and give ear.' They said, 'We hear, and rebel';

and they were made to drink the Calf in their hearts
 for their unbelief. Say: 'Evil is the thing
 your faith bids you to, if you are believers.
 Say: 'If the Last Abode with God is yours
 exclusively, and not for other people,
 then long for death—if you speak truly.'
 But they will never long for it, because of that
 their hands have forwarded; God knows the evildoers;
 and thou shalt find them the eagerest of men
 for life. And of the idolaters; there is one of them
 wishes if he might be spared a thousand years,
 yet his being spared alive shall not remove him
 from the chastisement. God sees the things they do.
 Say: 'Whosoever is an enemy to Gabriel—
 he it was that brought it down upon thy heart
 by the leave of God, confirming what was before it,
 and for a guidance and good tidings to the believers.
 Whosoever is an enemy to God and His angels
 and His Messengers, and Gabriel, and Michael—
 surely God is an enemy to the unbelievers.'
 And We have sent down unto thee signs, clear signs,
 and none disbelieves in them except the ungodly.

90

Why, whensoever they have made a covenant,
 does a party of them reject it?
 Nay, but the most of them are unbelievers.
 When there has come to them a Messenger from God
 confirming what was with them, a party of them
 that were given the Book reject the Book of God
 behind their backs, as though they knew not,
 and they follow what the Satans recited
 over Solomon's kingdom. Solomon disbelieved not,
 but the Satans disbelieved, teaching
 the people sorcery, and that which was sent down
 upon Babylon's two angels, Harut and Marut;
 they taught not any man, without they said,
 'We are but a temptation; do not disbelieve.'
 From them they learned how they might divide
 a man and his wife, yet they did not hurt
 any man thereby, save by the leave of God,
 and they learned what hurt them, and did not
 profit them, knowing well that whoso buys it
 shall have no share in the world to come;
 evil then was that they sold themselves for,
 if they had but known.
 Yet had they believed, and been godfearing,

95

a recompense from God had been better,
if they had but known.

O believers; do not say, 'Observe us,'
but say, 'Regard us'; and give ear;
for unbelievers awaits a painful chastisement.

Those unbelievers of the People of the Book
and the idolaters wish not that any good
should be sent down upon you from your Lord;
but God singles out for His mercy whom He will;
God is of bounty abounding.

And for whatever verse We abrogate
or cast into oblivion, We bring a better
or the like of it; knowst thou not that God
is powerful over everything?

Knowest thou not that to God belongs
the kingdom of the heavens and the earth,
and that you have none, apart from God,
neither protector nor helper?

Or do you desire to question your Messenger
as Moses was questioned in former time?
Whoso exchanges belief for unbelief has surely
strayed from the right way.

100

Many of the People of the Book wish they might
restore you as unbelievers, after you have believed,
in the jealousy of their souls, after the truth
has become clear to them; yet do you pardon
and be forgiving, till God brings His command;
truly God is powerful over everything.

And perform the prayer, and pay the alms; whatever
good you shall forward to your souls' account,
you shall find it with God; assuredly God
sees the things you do.

And they say, 'None shall enter Paradise
except that they be Jews or Christians.'

105

Such are their fancies. Say: 'Produce your proof,
if you speak truly.'

Nay, but whosoever submits his will to God,
being a good-doer, his wage is with his Lord,
and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.

The Jews say, 'The Christians stand not on anything';
the Christians say, 'The Jews stand not on anything';

yet they recite the Book. So too the ignorant
 say the like of them. God shall decide between them
 on the Day of Resurrection touching their differences.
 And who does greater evil than he who bars
 God's places of worship, so that His Name
 be not rehearsed in them, and strives to destroy them?
 Such men might never enter them, save in fear;
 for them is degradation in the present world,
 and in the world to come a mighty chastisement.

To God belong the East and West;
 whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God;
 God is All-embracing, All-knowing.

And they say, 'God has taken to Him a son.'
 Glory be to Him! Nay, to Him belongs
 all that is in the heavens and the earth;
 all obey His will—

the Creator of the heavens and the earth;
 and when He decrees a thing, He but says to it
 'Be,' and it is.

And they that know not say, 'Why does God not
 speak to us? Why does a sign not come to us?'
 So spoke those before them as these men say;
 their hearts are much alike. Yet We have made
 clear the signs unto a people who are sure.
 We have sent thee with the truth, good tidings
 to bear, and warning. Thou shalt not be questioned
 touching the inhabitants of Hell.

Never will the Jews be satisfied with thee,
 neither the Christians, not till thou followest
 their religion. Say: 'God's guidance
 is the true guidance.' If thou followest
 their caprices, after the knowledge that
 has come to thee, thou shalt have against God
 neither protector nor helper.

Those to whom We have given the Book
 and who recite it with true recitation,
 they believe in it; and whoso disbelieves in it,
 they shall be the losers

110

115

Children of Israel, remember My blessing
 wherewith I blessed you, and that I
 have preferred you above all beings;
 and beware a day when no soul for another
 shall give satisfaction, and no counterpoise
 shall be accepted from it, nor any

intercession shall be profitable to it,
neither shall they be helped.

And when his Lord tested Abraham
with certain words, and he fulfilled them.
He said, 'Behold, I make you a leader
for the people.' Said he, 'And of my seed?'
He said 'My covenant shall not reach
the evildoers.'

And when We appointed the House to be
a place of visitation for the people,
and a sanctuary,
and: 'Take to yourselves Abraham's station
for a place of prayer.' And We made covenant
with Abraham and Ishmael: 'Purify
My House for those that shall go about it
and those that cleave to it, to those who bow
and prostrate themselves.'

And when Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this
a land secure, and provide its people
with fruits, such of them as believe in
God and the Last Day.'

120

He said, 'And whoso disbelieves, to him
I shall give enjoyment a little, then I
shall compel him to the chastisement of the Fire—
how evil a homecoming!'

And when Abraham, and Ishmael with him,
raised up the foundations of the House:
'Our Lord, receive this from us; Thou art
the All-hearing, the All-knowing;
and, our Lord, make us submissive to Thee,
and of our seed a nation submissive
to Thee; and show us our holy rites, and
turn towards us; surely Thou turnest, and art
All-compassionate;
and, our Lord, do Thou send among them
a Messenger, one of them, who shall recite
to them Thy signs, and teach them the Book
and the Wisdom, and purify them; Thou art
the All-mighty, the All-wise.'

Who therefore shrinks from the religion
of Abraham, except he be foolish-minded?
Indeed, We chose him in the present world,
and in the world to come he shall be
among the righteous.

When his Lord said to him, 'Surrender,'
he said, 'I have surrendered me to

125

the Lord of all Being.'

And Abraham charged his sons with this
and Jacob likewise: 'My sons, God has chosen
for you the religion; see that you die not
save in surrender.'

Why, were you witnesses, when death came
to Jacob? When he said to his sons,
'What will you serve after me?' They said,
'We will serve thy God and the God of thy fathers
Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, One God;
to Him we surrender.'

That is a nation that has passed away;
there awaits them that they have earned,
and there awaits you that you have earned;
you shall not be questioned concerning
the things they did.

And they say, 'Be Jews or Christians and
you shall be guided.' Say thou: 'Nay, rather
the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith;
he was no idolater.'

Say you: 'We believe in God, and
in that which has been sent down on us
and sent down on Abraham, Ishmael,
Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes,
and that which was given to Moses and Jesus
and the Prophets, of their Lord; we
make no division between any of them, and
to Him we surrender.

And if they believe in the like of that you
believe in, then they are truly guided; but if
they turn away, then they are clearly in schism;
God will suffice you for them; He is
the All-hearing, the All-knowing;
the baptism of God; and who is there
that baptizes fairer than God?
Him we are serving.

Say: 'Would you then dispute with us
concerning God, who is our Lord
and your Lord? Our deeds belong to us,
and to you belong your deeds; Him
we serve sincerely.

Or do you say, "Abraham, Ishmael,
Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes—
they were Jews, or they were Christians"?'
Say: 'Have you then greater knowledge,

or God? And who does greater evil than he who conceals a testimony received from God? And God is not heedless of the things you do.'

That is a nation that has passed away; there awaits them that they have earned, and there awaits you that you have earned; you shall not be questioned concerning the things they did.

135

The fools among the people will say, 'What has turned them from the direction they were facing in their prayers aforetime?' Say:

'To God belong the East and the West; He guides whomsoever He will to a straight path.'

Thus We appointed you a midmost nation that you might be witnesses to the people, and that the Messenger might be a witness to you; and We did not appoint the direction thou wast facing, except that We might know who followed the Messenger from him who turned on his heels—though it were a grave thing save for those whom God has guided; but God would never leave your faith to waste—truly, God is All-gentle with the people, All-compassionate.

We have seen thee turning thy face about in the heaven; now We will surely turn thee to a direction that shall satisfy thee. Turn thy face towards the Holy Mosque; and wherever you are, turn your faces towards it. Those who have been given the Book know it is the truth from their Lord; God is not heedless of the things they do.

Yet if thou shouldst bring to those that have been given the Book every sign, they will not follow thy direction; thou art not a follower of their direction, neither are they followers of one another's direction. If thou followest their caprices, after the knowledge that has come to thee, then thou wilt surely be among the evildoers whom We have given the Book, and they recognize

140

as they recognize their sons, even though
there is a party of them conceal the truth
and that wittingly.

The truth comes from thy Lord; then be not
among the doubters.

Every man has his direction to which he turns;
so be you forward in good works. Wherever
you may be, God will bring you all together;
surely God is powerful over everything.

From whatsoever place thou issuest, turn
thy face towards the Holy Mosque; it is
the truth from thy Lord. God is not heedless of
the things you do.

From whatsoever place thou issuest, turn
thy face towards the Holy Mosque; and
wherever you may be, turn your faces
towards it, that the people may not have
any argument against you, excepting
the evildoers of them; and fear you them not,
but fear you Me; and that I may perfect
My blessing upon you, and that haply so
you may be guided;

as also We have sent among you, of yourselves,
a Messenger, to recite Our signs to you
and to purify you, and to teach you
the Book and the Wisdom, and to teach you
that you knew not.

So remember Me, and I will remember
you; and be thankful to Me; and be you not
ungrateful towards Me.

O all you who believe, seek you help
in patience and prayer; surely God is
with the patient.

And say not of those slain in God's way,
'They are dead'; rather they are living,
but you are not aware.

Surely We will try you with something of fear
and hunger, and diminution of goods
and lives and fruits; yet give thou good tidings
unto the patient

who, when they are visited by an affliction,
say, 'Surely we belong to God, and
to Him we return';

upon those rest blessings and mercy
from their Lord, and those—they are
the truly guided.

145

150

Safa and Marwa are among the waymarks
of God; so whosoever makes the Pilgrimage
to the House, or the Visitation,
it is no fault in him to circumambulate
them; and whoso volunteers good, God is
All-grateful, All-knowing.

Those who conceal the clear signs and the guidance
that We have sent down, after We have shown them
clearly in the Book—they shall be cursed by
God and the cursers,
save such as repent and make amends, and show
clearly—towards them I shall turn; I turn,
All-compassionate.

155

But those who disbelieve, and die disbelieving—
upon them shall rest the curse of God
and the angels, and of men altogether,
therein dwelling forever; the chastisement
shall not be lightened for them; no respite
shall be given them.

Your God is One God;
there is no god but He,
the All-merciful, the All-compassionate.

Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth
and the alternation of night and day
and the ship that runs in the sea with profit
to men, and the water God sends down from heaven
therewith reviving the earth after it is dead
and His scattering abroad in it all manner of
crawling thing, and the turning about of the winds
and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth—
surely there are signs for a people having understanding.

Yet there be men who take to themselves compeers
apart from God, loving them as God is loved;
but those that believe love God more ardently.
O if the evildoers might see, when they see
the chastisement, that the power altogether
belongs to God, and that God is terrible
in chastisement,
when those that were followed disown their followers,
and they see the chastisement, and their cords
are cut asunder,
and those that followed say, 'O if only we might

160

return again and disown them, as they have disowned us!' Even so God shall show them their works.
O bitter regrets for them! Never shall they
issue from the Fire.

O men, eat of what is in the earth
lawful and good; and follow not the steps
of Satan; he is a manifest foe to you.
he only commands you to evil and indecency,
and that you should speak against God such things
as you know not.

And when it is said to them, 'Follow what God
has sent down,' they say, 'No; but we will follow
such things as we found our fathers doing.'
What? And if their fathers had no understanding
of anything, and if they were not guided?
The likeness of those who disbelieve is as
the likeness of one who shouts to that
which hears nothing, save a call and a cry;
deaf, dumb, blind—they do not understand.

165

O believers, eat of the good things
wherewith We have provided you, and give thanks
to God, if it be Him that you serve.
These things only has He forbidden you:
carrion, blood, the flesh of swine,
what has been hallowed to other than God.
Yet whoso is constrained, not desiring
nor transgressing, no sin shall be on him;
God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.

Those who conceal what of the Book God has sent down
on them, and sell it for a little price—they shall eat
naught but the Fire in their bellies; God shall not
speak to them on the Day of Resurrection
neither purify them; there awaits them
a painful chastisement.

Those are they that have bought error at
the price of guidance, and chastisement at
the price of pardon; how patiently they
shall endure the Fire!

170

That, because God has sent down the Book
with the truth; and those that are
at variance regarding the Book
are in wide schism.

It is not piety, that you turn your faces
to the East and to the West.

True piety is this:

to believe in God, and the Last Day,
the angels, the Book, and the Prophets,
to give of one's substance, however cherished,
to kinsmen, and orphans,
the needy, the traveller, beggars,
and to ransom the slave,
to perform the prayer, to pay the alms.
And they who fulfil their covenant
when they have engaged in a covenant,
and endure with fortitude
misfortune, hardship and peril,
these are they who are true in their faith,
these are the truly godfearing.

O believers, prescribed for you is
retaliation, touching the slain;
freeman for freeman, slave for slave,
female for female. But if aught is pardoned
a man by his brother, let the pursuing
be honourable, and let the payment be
with kindness. That is a lightening
granted you by your Lord, and a mercy;
and for him who commits aggression
after that—for him there awaits
a painful chastisement.

In retaliation there is life for you,
men possessed of minds; haply you
will be godfearing.

175

Prescribed for you, when any of you
is visited by death, and he leaves behind
some goods, is to make testament
in favour of his parents and kinsmen
honourably—an obligation
on the godfearing.

Then if any man changes it after
hearing it, the sin shall rest upon
those who change it; surely God is
All-hearing, All-knowing.

But if any man fears injustice or
sin from one making testament, and so
makes things right between them, then
sin shall not rest upon him; surely God is
All-forgiving, All-compassionate.

O believers, prescribed for you is the Fast, even as it was prescribed for those that were before you—haply you will be godfearing—
 for days numbered; and if any of you be sick, or if he be on a journey,
 then a number of other days; and for those who are able to fast, a redemption by feeding a poor man. Yet better it is for him who volunteers good, and that you should fast is better for you, if you but know;
 the month of Ramadan, wherein the Koran was sent down to be a guidance to the people, and as clear signs of the Guidance and the Salvation
 So let those of you, who are present at the month, fast it; and if any of you be sick, or if he be on a journey, then a number of other days; God desires ease for you, and desires not hardship for you; and that you fulfil the number, and magnify God that He has guided you, and haply you will be thankful.

180

And when My servants question thee concerning Me—I am near to answer the call of the caller, when he calls to Me; so let them respond to Me, and let them believe in Me; haply so they will go aright.

✱ Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is to go to your wives; they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them. God knows that you have been betraying yourselves, and has turned to you and pardoned you. So now lie with them, and seek what God has prescribed for you. And eat and drink, until the white thread shows clearly to you from the black thread at the dawn; then complete the Fast unto the night, and do not lie with them while you cleave to the mosques. Those are God's bounds; keep well within them. So God makes clear His signs to men; haply they will be godfearing.

Consume not your goods between you
in vanity; neither proffer it
to the judges, that you may sinfully
consume a portion of other men's goods,
and that wittingly.

They will question thee concerning
the new moons. Say: 'They are appointed
times for the people, and the Pilgrimage.'

185

It is not piety to come to the houses
from the backs of them; but piety is
to be godfearing; so come to the houses
by the doors, and fear God; haply so
you will prosper.

And fight in the way of God with those
who fight with you, but aggress not: God loves
not the aggressors.

And slay them wherever you come upon them,
and expel them from where they expelled you;
persecution is more grievous than slaying.

But fight them not by the Holy Mosque
until they should fight you there;
then, if they fight you, slay them—
such is the recompense of unbelievers—
but if they give over, surely God is
All-forgiving, All-compassionate.
Fight them, till there is no persecution
and the religion is God's; then if they
give over, there shall be no enmity
save for evildoers.

The holy month for the holy month;
holy things demand retaliation.

190

Whoso commits aggression against you,
do you commit aggression against him
like as he has committed against you;
and fear you God, and know that God is
with the godfearing.

And expend in the way of God;
and cast not yourselves by your own hands
into destruction, but be good-doers; God
loves the good-doers.

Fulfil the Pilgrimage and the Visitation
unto God; but if you are prevented,

then such offering as may be feasible.
 And shave not your heads, till the offering
 reaches its place of sacrifice. If any
 of you is sick, or injured in his head,
 then redemption by fast, or freewill offering,
 or ritual sacrifice. When you are secure,
 then whosoever enjoys the Visitation
 until the Pilgrimage, let his offering
 be such as may be feasible; or if he
 finds none, then a fast of three days
 in the Pilgrimage, and of seven when
 you return, that is ten completely;
 that is for him whose family are not
 present at the Holy Mosque. And fear
 God, and know that God is terrible
 in retribution.

¶ The Pilgrimage is in months well-known;
 whoso undertakes the duty of Pilgrimage
 in them shall not go in to his womenfolk
nor indulge in ungodliness and disputing
 in the Pilgrimage. Whatever good you do,
 God knows it. And take provision;
 but the best provision is godfearing,
 so fear you Me, men possessed of minds!
 It is no fault in you, that you should seek
 bounty from your Lord; but when you press on
 from Arafat, then remember God
 at the Holy Waymark, and remember Him
 as He has guided you, though formerly you
 were gone astray.

Then press on from where the people
 press on, and pray for God's forgiveness;
God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.
 And when you have performed your holy rites
 remember God, as you remember your fathers
 or yet more devoutly. Now some men
 there are who say, 'Our Lord, give to us
 in this world'; such men shall have no part
 in the world to come.

And others there are who say, 'Our Lord,
 give to us in this world good, and good
 in the world to come, and guard us against the
 chastisement of the Fire';
 those—they shall have a portion from
 what they have earned; and God is swift

at the reckoning. Judgement

And remember God during certain days numbered. If any man hastens on in two days, that is no sin in him; and if any delays, it is not a sin in him, if he be godfearing. And fear you God, and know that unto Him you shall be mustered.

And some men there are whose saying upon the present world pleases thee, and such a one calls on God to witness what is in his heart, yet he is most stubborn in altercation, and when he turns his back, he hastens about the earth, to do corruption there and to destroy the tillage and the stock; and God loves not corruption; and when it is said to him, 'Fear God', vainglory seizes him in his sin. So Gehenna shall be enough for him—how evil a cradling!

200

But other men there are that sell themselves desiring God's good pleasure; and God is gentle with His servants.

O believers, enter the peace, all of you, and follow not the steps of Satan; he is a manifest foe to you. But if you slip, after the clear signs have come to you, know then that God is All-mighty, All-wise.

205

What do they look for, but that God shall come to them in the cloud-shadows, and the angels? The matter is determined, and unto God all matters are returned. Ask the Children of Israel how many a clear sign We gave them. Whoso changes God's blessing after it has come to him, God is terrible in retribution.

Decked out fair to the unbelievers is the present life, and they deride the believers; but those who were godfearing } Believers will be saved
shall be above them on the Resurrection Day;
and God provides whomsoever He will without reckoning.

like the Jews
 The people were one nation; then God sent forth
 the Prophets, good tidings to bear
 and warning, and He sent down with them
 the Book with the truth, that He might
 decide between the people touching their differences;
 and only those who had been given it
 were at variance upon it, after the
 clear signs had come to them, being insolent
 one to another; then God guided those
who believed to the truth, touching which
 they were at variance, by His leave;
 and God guides whomsoever He will
 to a straight path.

Or did you suppose you should enter Paradise
 without there had come upon you the like
 of those who passed away before you?
 They were afflicted by misery and hardship
 and where so convulsed, that the Messenger
 and those who believed with him said,
 ‘When comes God’s help?’ Ah, but surely
 God’s help is nigh.

210

They will question thee concerning
 what they should expend. Say: ‘Whatsoever good
 you expend is for parents and kinsmen,
 orphans, the needy, and the traveller;
 and whatever good you may do, God has
 knowledge of it.’

Prescribed for you is fighting, though it be
 hateful to you.
 Yet it may happen that you will hate a thing
 which is better for you;
 and it may happen that you
 will love a thing which is worse for you; God knows,
 and you know not.

They will question thee concerning
 the holy month, and fighting in it.
 Say: ‘Fighting in it is a heinous thing,
 but to bar from God’s way, and disbelief in Him,
 and the Holy Mosque, and to expel its people
 from it—that is more heinous in God’s sight;
 and persecution is more heinous than slaying.’
 They will not cease to fight with you,
 till they turn you from your religion,
 if they are able; and whosoever of you

turns from his religion, and dies disbelieving—
their works have failed in this world and the next;
those are the inhabitants of the Fire; therein
they shall dwell forever.

But the believers, and those who emigrate
and struggle in God's way—those have hope of
God's compassion; and God is All-forgiving,
All-compassionate.

215

They will question thee concerning
wine, and arrow-shuffling. Say: 'In both
is heinous sin, and uses for men,
but the sin in them is more heinous
than the usefulness.'

They will question thee concerning
what they should expend. Say: 'The abundance.'
So god makes clear His signs to you; haply
you will reflect;
in this world, and the world to come.

They will question thee concerning
the orphans. Say: 'To set their affairs
aright is good.

And if you intermix with them, they are
your brothers. God knows well
him who works corruption from him
who sets aright; and had He willed
He would have harassed you. Surely God is
All-mighty, All-wise.'

Do not marry idolatresses, until
they believe; a believing slavegirl
is better than an idolatress, though
you may admire her. And do not marry
idolaters, until they believe. A believing
slave is better than an idolater, though
you may admire him.

220

Those call unto the Fire; and God calls unto
Paradise, and pardon, by His leave, and He
makes clear His signs to the people; haply
they will remember.

They will question thee concerning
the monthly course. Say: 'It is hurt;
so go apart from women during
the monthly course, and do not approach them

till they are clean. When they have cleansed themselves, then come unto them as God has commanded you.' Truly, God loves those who repent, and He loves those who cleanse themselves.

Your women are a tillage for you; so come unto your tillage as you wish, and forward for your souls; and fear God, and know that you shall meet Him. Give thou good tidings to the believers.

Do not make God a hindrance, through your oath to being pious and godfearing, and putting things right between men. Surely God is All-hearing, All-knowing.

God will not take you to task for a slip in your oaths; but He will take you to task for what your hearts have earned; and God is All-forgiving, All-clement.

For those who foreswear their women a wait of four months; if they revert, God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate; but if they resolve on divorce, surely God is All-hearing, All-knowing.

Divorced women shall wait by themselves for three periods; and it is not lawful for them to hide what God has created in their wombs; if they believe in God and the Last Day. In such time their mates have better right to restore them, if they desire to set things right. Women have such honourable rights as obligations, but their men have a degree above them; God is All-mighty, All-wise.

Divorce is twice; then honourable retention or setting free kindly. It is not lawful for you to take of what you have given them unless the couple fear they may not maintain Gods' bounds; if you fear they may not maintain God's bounds, it is no fault in them for her to redeem herself. Those are God's bounds; do not transgress them. Whosoever transgresses the bounds of God—those are the evildoers.

If he divorces her finally, she shall not

be lawful to him after that, until she marries another husband. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other, if they suppose that they will maintain God's bounds. Those are God's bounds; He makes them clear unto a people that have knowledge.

When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, then retain them honourably or set them free honourably; do not retain them by force, to transgress; whoever does that has wronged himself. Take not God's signs in mockery, and remember God's blessing upon you, and the Book and the Wisdom He has sent down on you, to admonish you. And fear God, and know that God has knowledge of everything.

When you divorce women, and they have reached their term, do not debar them from marrying their husbands, when they have agreed together honourably. That is an admonition for whoso of you believes in God and the Last Day; that is cleaner and purer for you; God knows, and you know not.

*Set of guidelines,
similar to Commandments*

Mothers shall suckle their children two years completely, for such as desire to fulfil the suckling. It is for the father to provide them and clothe them honourably. No soul is charged save to its capacity; a mother shall not be pressed for her child, neither a father for his child. The heir has a like duty. But if the couple desire by mutual consent and consultation to wean, then it is no fault in them.

And if you desire to seek nursing for your children, it is no fault in you provide you hand over what you have given honourably; and fear God, and know that God sees the things you do.

And those of you who die, leaving wives, they shall wait by themselves for four months and ten nights; when they have reached their term then it is no fault in you what they may do with themselves honourably. God is aware of the things you do.

There is no fault in you touching the proposal
to women you offer, or hide in your hearts;
God knows that you will be mindful of them;
but do not make troth with them secretly
without you speak honourable words.
And do not resolve on the knot of marriage
until the book has reached its term; and know
that God knows what is in your hearts,
so be fearful of Him; and know that God is
All-forgiving, All-clement.

There is no fault in you, if you divorce
women while as yet you have not touched them
nor appointed any marriage-portion for them;
yet make provision for them, the affluent man
according to his means, and according to his means
the needy man, honourably—an obligation
on the good-doers.
And if you divorce them before you have
touched them, and you have already appointed
for them a marriage-portion, then one-half
of what you have appointed, unless it be
they make remission, or he makes remission
in whose hand is the knot of marriage;
yet that you should remit is nearer
to godfearing. Forget not to be bountiful
one towards another. Surely God sees
the things you do.

Be you watchful over the prayers,
and the middle prayer; and do you stand
obedient to God.

And if you are in fear, then afoot
or mounted; but when you are secure, then
remember God, as He taught you the things
that you knew not.

And those of you who die, leaving wives,
let them make testament for their wives,
provision for a year without expulsion; but if
they go forth, there is no fault in you what
they may do with themselves honourably; God is
All-mighty, All-wise.

There shall be for divorced women
provision honourable—an obligation
on the godfearing.

So God makes clear His signs for you; haply
you will understand.

Hast thou not regarded those who went forth
from their habitations in their thousands
fearful of death? God said to them, 'Die!'
Then He gave them life. Truly God is bounteous
to the people, but most of the people
are not thankful.

So fight in God's way, and know that God is
All-hearing, All-knowing.

245

Who is he that will lend God a good loan,
and He will multiply it for him manifold?
God grasps, and outspreads; and unto Him
you shall be returned.

Hast thou not regarded the Council
of the Children of Israel, after Moses,
when they said to a Prophet of theirs,
'Raise up for us a king, and we will fight
in God's way.' He said, 'Might it be
that, if fighting is prescribed for you,
you will not fight?' They said, 'Why should we
not fight in God's way, who have been
expelled from our habitations
and our children?' Yet when fighting was
prescribed for them, they turned their backs
except a few of them; and God has knowledge
of the evildoers.

Then their Prophet said to them, 'Verily
God has raised up Saul for you as king.'
They said, 'How should he be king over us
who have better right than he to kingship,
seeing he has not been given amplitude
of wealth?' He said, 'God has chosen him
over you, and has increased him
broadly in knowledge and body. God gives
the kingship to whom He will; and God is
All-embracing, All-knowing.'

And their Prophet said to them, 'The sign
of his kingship is that the Ark will come to you,
in it a Shechina from your Lord, and a remnant
of what the folk of Moses and Aaron's folk
left behind, the angels bearing it.
Surely in that shall be a sign for you if
you are believers.'

And when Saul went forth with the hosts
 he said, 'God will try you with a river;
 whosoever drinks of it is not of me,
 and whoso tastes it not, he is of me,
 saving him who scoops up with his hand.'
 But they drank of it, except a few
 of them; and when he crossed it, and those
 who believed with him, they said, 'We have no
 power today against Goliath and his hosts.'
 Said those who reckoned they should meet God,
 'How often a little company has overcome
 a numerous company, by God's leave! And God
 is with the patient.'

So, when they went forth against Goliath
 and his hosts, they said, 'Our Lord, pour out
 upon us patience, and make firm our feet,
 and give us aid against the people of
 the unbelievers!'

And they routed them, by the leave of God,
 and David slew Goliath; and God gave him
 the kingship, Wisdom, and He taught him
 such as He willed. Had God not driven back
 the people, some by the means of others,
 the earth had surely corrupted; but God is bounteous
 unto all beings.

These are the signs of God We recite to thee
 in truth,

and assuredly thou art of the number
 of the Envoys.

And those Messengers, some We have preferred
 above others;
 some there are to whom god spoke, and some He
 raised in rank.

And We gave Jesus son of Mary the clear signs
 and confirmed him with the Holy Spirit.
 And had God willed, those who came after him
 would not have fought one against the other
 after the clear signs had come to them;
 but they fell into variance, and some of them
 believed, and some disbelieved; and had God willed
 they would not have fought one against the other;
 but God does whatsoever He desires.

O believers, expend of that wherewith
 We have provided you, before there comes a day

wherein shall be neither traffick, nor friendship,
nor intercession; and the unbelievers—they
are the evildoers.

God
there is no god but He, the
Living, the Everlasting.
Slumber seizes Him not, neither sleep;
to Him belongs
all that is in the heavens and the earth.
Who is there that shall intercede with Him
save by His leave?
He knows what lies before them
and what is after them,
and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge
save such as He wills.
His Throne comprises the heavens and earth;
the preserving of them oppresses Him not;
He is the All-high, the All-glorious.

No compulsion is there in religion.
Rectitude has become clear from error.
So whosoever disbelieves in idols
and believes in God, has laid hold of
the most firm handle, unbreaking; God is
All-hearing, All-knowing.

God is the Protector of the believers;
He brings them forth from the shadows
into the light.
And the unbelievers—their protectors are
idols, that bring them forth from the light
into the shadows;
those are the inhabitants of the Fire,
therein dwelling forever.

Hast thou not regarded him who disputed
with Abraham, concerning his Lord,
that God had given him the kingship? When
Abraham said, 'My Lord is He who gives
life, and makes to die,' he said, 'I give
life, and make to die.' Said Abraham, 'God
brings the sun from the east; so bring thou
it from the west.' Then the unbeliever
was confounded. God guides not the people
of the evildoers.
Or such as he who passed by a city

that was fallen down upon its turrets;
 he said, 'How shall God give life to this
 now it is dead?' So God made him die
 a hundred years, then He raised him up,
 saying, 'How long hast thou tarried?' He said,
 'I have tarried a day, or part of a day.'
 Said He, 'Nay; thou hast tarried a hundred years.
 Look at thy food and drink—it has not spoiled;
 and look at thy ass. So We would make thee
 a sign for the people. And look at the bones,
 how We shall set them up, and then clothe them
 with flesh.' So, when it was made clear
 to him, he said, 'I know that God is powerful
 over everything.'
 And when Abraham said, 'My Lord, show me
 how Thou wilt give life to the dead,' He said,
 'Why, dost thou not believe?' 'Yes,' he said,
 'but that my heart may be at rest.' Said He,
 'Take four birds, and twist them to thee,
 then set a part of them on every hill,
 then summon them, and they will come to thee
 running. And do thou know that God is
 All-mighty, All-wise.'

The likeness of those who expend their wealth
 in the way of God is as the likeness
 of a grain of corn that sprouts seven ears,
 in every ear a hundred grains. So God
 multiplies unto whom He will; God is
 All-embracing, All-knowing.
 Those who expend their wealth in the way of God
 then follow not up what they have expended with
 reproach and injury, their wage is with their Lord,
 and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.
 Honourable words, and forgiveness, are better than
 a freewill offering followed by injury; and God is
 All-sufficient, All-clement.
 O believers, void not your freewill offerings
 with reproach and injury, as one who expends
 of his substance to show off to men
 and believes not in God and the Last Day.
 The likeness of him is as the likeness
 of a smooth rock on which is soil,
 and a torrent smites it, and leaves it barren.
 They have no power over anything that they
 have earned. God guides not the people
 of the unbelievers.

But the likeness of those who expend their wealth, seeking God's good pleasure, and to confirm themselves, is as the likeness of a garden upon a hill; a torrent smites it and it yields its produce twofold; if no torrent smites it, yet dew; and God sees the things you do.

Would any of you wish to have a garden of palms and vines, with rivers flowing beneath it, and all manner of fruit there for him, then old age smites him, and he has seed, but weaklings, then a whirlwind with fire smites it, and it is consumed?

So God makes clear the signs to you; haply you will reflect.

O believers, expend of the good things you have earned, and of that We have produced for you from the earth, and intend not the corrupt of it for your expending;

for you would never take it yourselves, except you closed an eye on it; and know that God is All-sufficient, All-laudable.

Satan promises you poverty, and bids you unto indecency; but God promises you His pardon and His bounty; and God is All-embracing, All-knowing.

He gives the Wisdom to whomsoever He will, and whoso is given the Wisdom, has been given much good; yet none remembers but men possessed of minds.

And whatever expenditure you expend, and whatever vow you vow, surely God knows it. No helpers have the evildoers.

If you publish your freewill offerings, it is excellent; but if you conceal them, and give them to the poor, that is better for you, and will acquit you of your evil deeds; God is aware of the things you do.

Thou art not responsible for guiding them; but God guides whomsoever He will.

And whatever good you expend is for yourselves, for then you are expending, being desirous only of God's Face; and whatever good you expend shall be repaid to you

in full, and you will not be wronged,
 it being for the poor who are restrained
 in the way of God, and are unable
 to journey in the land; the ignorant man
 supposes them rich because of their abstinence,
 but thou shalt know them by their mark—
 they do not beg of men importunately.
 And whatever good you expend, surely God has
 knowledge of it.

Those expend their wealth night and day, secretly
 and in public, their wage awaits them with their Lord,
 and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.

275

Those who devour usury shall not rise again
 except as he rises, whom Satan of the touch
 prostrates; that is because they say,
 'Trafficking is like usury.' God has
 permitted trafficking, and forbidden usury.
 Whosoever receives an admonition
 from his Lord and gives over, he shall have
 his past gains, and his affair is
 committed to God; but whosoever reverts—
 those are the inhabitants of the Fire,
 therein dwelling forever.
 God blots out usury, but freewill offerings
 He augments with interest. God loves not
 any guilty ingrate.

Those who believe and do deeds of righteousness,
 and perform the prayer, and pay the alms—
 their wage awaits them with their Lord,
 and no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow.

O believers, fear you God; and
 give up the usury that is outstanding, if
 you are believers.
 But if you do not, then take notice that
 God shall war with you, and His Messenger; yet
 if you repent, you shall have your principal,
 unwronging and unwronged.
 And if any man should be in difficulties,
 let him have respite till things are easier; but
 that you should give freewill offerings is better for you,
 did you but know.
 And fear a day wherein you shall be
 returned to God, and every soul shall be

280

paid in full what it has earned; and they shall not be wronged.

O believers, when you contract a debt one upon another for a stated term, write it down, and let a writer write it down between you justly, and let not any writer refuse to write it down, as God has taught him; so let him write, and let the debtor dictate, and let him fear God his Lord and not diminish aught of it. And if the debtor be a fool, or weak, or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate justly. And call in to witness two witnesses, men; or if the two be not men, then one man and two women, such witnesses as you approve of, that if one of the two women errs the other will remind her; and let the witnesses not refuse, whenever they are summoned. And be not loath to write it down, whether it be small or great, with its term; that is more equitable in God's sight, more upright for testimony, and likelier that you will not be in doubt. Unless it be merchandise present that you give and take between you; then it shall be no fault in you if you do not write it down. And take witnesses when you are trafficking one with another. And let not either writer or witness be pressed; or if you do, that is ungodliness in you. And fear God; God teaches you, and God has knowledge of everything. And if you are upon a journey, and you do not find a writer, then a pledge in hand. but If one of you trusts another, let him who is trusted deliver his trust, and let him fear God his Lord. And do not conceal the testimony; whoso conceals it, his heart is sinful; and God has knowledge of the things you do. To God belongs all that is in the heavens and earth. Whether you publish what is in your hearts or hide it, God shall make reckoning with you for it. He will forgive whom He will,

and chastise whom He will; God is powerful
over everything.

The Messenger believes in what was sent down to
him from his Lord,
and the believers; each one believes in God
and His angels,
and in His Books and His Messengers; we
make no division
between any one of His Messengers. They say,
'We hear, and obey.
Our Lord, grant us Thy forgiveness; unto Thee
is the homecoming.'

God charges no soul save to its capacity;
standing to its account is what it has earned,
and against its account what it has merited.

Our Lord,
take us not to task
if we forget, or make mistake.
Our Lord,
charge us not with a load such
as Thou didst lay upon those before us.
Our Lord,
do Thou not burden us
beyond what we have the strength to bear.
And pardon us,
and forgive us,
and have mercy on us;
Thou art our Protector.
And help us against the people
of the unbelievers.

Reading 13

THE BENEDICTINE RULE

Saint Benedict of Nursia

The monastic way of life soon spread from Egypt to Palestine and Syria and eventually throughout the Christian Roman Empire. In Italy, Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–547), scion of a wealthy Roman family, founded twelve monasteries, the best known being at Monte Cassino in the mountains of southern Italy. Benedict wrote a set of rules for the governance of his monks; the Benedictine Rule became the model for many monasteries throughout Latin Christendom. In the following extract, Benedict summarizes the purpose and principles of monastic life.

... Therefore we are constrained to found a school for the service of the Lord. In its organization we hope we shall ordain nothing severe, nothing burdensome; but if there should result anything a little irksome by the demands of justice for the correction of vices and the persevering of charity, do not therefore, through fear, avoid the way of salvation, which cannot be entered upon save through a narrow entrance, but in which, as life progresses and the heart becomes filled with faith, one walks in the unspeakable sweetness of love; but never departing from His control, and persevering in His doctrine in the monastery until death, let us with patience share in the sufferings of Christ, that we may be worthy to be partakers in His kingdom. . . .

What the Abbot Should Be Like

The abbot who is worthy to rule a monastery ought to remember by what name they are called, and to justify by their deeds the name of a superior. For he is believed to take the place of Christ in the monastery, since he is called by his name, as the apostle says: “Ye have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we call, Abba, Father.”

And so the abbot ought not (God forbid) to teach or decree or order anything apart from the precept of the Lord; but his rules and his teaching ought always to be leavened with the leaven of divine justice in the minds of his disciples; and let the abbot be always mindful that in the great judgment of God, both his teaching and the obedience of his disciples will be weighed in the balance. And let the abbot know that whatever the master finds lacking in the sheep will be

charged to the fault of the shepherd. Only in case the pastor has shown the greatest diligence in his management of an unruly and disobedient flock, and has given his whole care to the correction of their evil doings, will that pastor be cleared at the judgment of God and be able to say with the prophet, "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation, but they despising have scorned me"; then let the punishment of eternal death itself fall upon the disobedient sheep of his care.

Therefore when anyone takes on himself the name of abbot, he should govern his disciples by a twofold teaching, that is, let him show forth all the good and holy things by his deeds rather than by his words; to ready disciples he ought to set forth the commands of God in words, but to the hard of heart, and to the simple-minded he ought to illustrate the divine precepts in his deeds. And all things which he has taught his disciples to be wrong, let him demonstrate in his action that they should not be done, lest sometime God should say to him, a sinner: "Why dost thou declare my statutes or take my testimony in thy mouth? Thou hast hated instruction and cast My word behind thee"; and again: "Thou who hast seen the mote in thy brother's eyes, hast not seen the beam in thine own eye."

Let him not be a respecter of persons in the monastery. Let not one be loved more than another, unless he shall have found someone to be better than another in good deeds and in obedience; let not a freeman be preferred to one coming from servitude, unless there be some good and reasonable cause; but if according to the dictates of justice it shall have seemed best to the abbot, let him do this with anyone of any rank whatsoever; otherwise let each keep his own place, since, whether bond or free, we are all one in Christ, and under one God we bear the same burden of service, for there is no respect of persons with God; only in this regard are we distinguished with him if we are found better and more humble than others in our good deeds. Therefore let his love for all be the same, and let one discipline be put upon all according to merit. . . .

About Calling the Brothers to Council

Whenever anything especial is to be done in the monastery, the abbot shall convoke the whole body and himself set forth the matter at issue. And after listening to the advice of the brothers, he shall consider it by himself, and shall do what he shall have judged most useful. Now we say all should be called to the council, because the Lord often reveals to the younger brother what is best to be done.

But let the brothers give advice with all subjection of humility and not presume to defend boldly what seemed good to them, but rather rely on the judgment of the abbot, and all obey him in what he has judged to be for their welfare. But just as it is fitting that the disciples obey the master, so is it incumbent on him to dispose everything wisely and justly.

Therefore, let all follow the rule of the master in all things, and let no one depart from it rashly; let no one in the monastery follow the desire of his own heart. And let no one strive with his abbot shamelessly either within or without the monastery; and if he shall have presumed to do so, let him be subjected to the regular discipline. And let the abbot himself do all things in the fear of God and in the observance of the rule, knowing that he must without doubt render account unto God, the most just judge, for all his judgments.

If there are any matters of minor importance to be done for the welfare of the monastery, let the abbot take the advice only of the elders, as it is written: "Do all things with counsel, and after it is done thou wilt not repent."

Concerning Those Who, Being Often Rebuked, Do Not Amend

If any brother, having frequently been rebuked for any fault, do not amend even after he has been excommunicated, a more severe rebuke shall fall upon him;—that is, the punishment of the lash shall be inflicted upon him. But if he do not even then amend; or, if perchance—which God forbid,—swelled with pride he try even to defend his works: then the abbot shall act as a wise physician. If he have applied . . . the ointments of exhortation, the medicaments [medicines] of the Divine Scriptures; if he have proceeded to the last blasting of excommunication, or to blows with rods, and if he sees that his efforts avail nothing: let him also—what is greater—call in the prayer of himself and all the brothers for him: that God who can do all things may work a cure upon an infirm brother. But if he be not healed even in this way, then at last the abbot may use the pruning knife, as the apostle says: “Remove evil from you,” etc.: lest one diseased sheep contaminate the whole flock.

Whether Brothers Who Leave the Monastery Ought Again To Be Received

A brother who goes out, or is cast out, of the monastery for his own fault, if he wish to return, shall first promise every amends for the fault on account of which he departed; and thus he shall be received into the lowest degree—so that thereby his humility may be proved. But if he again depart, up to the third time he shall be received. Knowing that after this every opportunity of return is denied to him.

Concerning Boys Under Age, How They Shall Be Corrected

Every age or intelligence ought to have its proper bounds. Therefore as often as boys or youths, or those who are less able to understand how great is the punishment of excommunication: as often as such persons offend, they shall either be afflicted with excessive fasts, or coerced with severe blows, that they may be healed.

Concerning the Reception of Guests

All guests who come shall be received as though they were Christ; for He Himself said: “I was a stranger and ye took Me in.” And to all, fitting honour shall be shown; but, most of all, to servants of the faith and to pilgrims. When, therefore, a guest is announced, the prior or the brothers shall run to meet him, with every office of love. And first they shall pray together; and thus they shall be joined together in peace. Which kiss of peace shall not first be offered, unless a

prayer have preceded; on account of the wiles of the devil. In the salutation itself, moreover, all humility shall be exhibited. In the case of all guests arriving or departing: with inclined head, or with prostrating of the whole body upon the ground, Christ, who is also received in them, shall be adored.

The monks gathered together for prayer seven times in the course of the day. Prayers were chanted from set texts.

Concerning the Art of Singing

Whereas we believe that there is a divine presence, and that the eyes of the Lord look down everywhere upon the good and the evil: chiefly then, without any doubt, we may believe that this is the case when we are assisting at divine service. Therefore let us always be mindful of what the prophets say: “Serve the Lord in all fear”; and before the face of the Divinity and His angels; and let us so stand and again, “Sing wisely”; and “in the sight of the angels I will sing unto thee.” Therefore let us consider how we ought to conduct ourselves and sing that our voice may accord with our intention.

Concerning Reverence for Prayer

If when to powerful men we wish to suggest anything, we do not presume to do it unless with reverence and humility: how much more should we supplicate with all humility, and devotion of purity, God who is the Lord of all. And let us know that we are heard, not for much speaking, but for purity of heart and compunction of tears. And, therefore, prayer ought to be brief and pure; unless perchance it be prolonged by the influence of the inspiration of the divine grace. When assembled together, then, let the prayer be altogether brief; and, the sign being given by the prior, let us rise together.

Concerning the Daily Manual Labor

Idleness is the enemy of the soul. And therefore, at fixed times, the brothers ought to be occupied in manual labour; and again, at fixed times, in sacred reading.

Concerning Humility

... If we wish to attain to the height of the greatest humility, and to that divine exaltation which is attained by the humility of this present life, we must mount by our own acts that ladder which appeared in a dream to Jacob,¹ upon which angels appeared unto him ascending and descend-

¹Jacob, a patriarch of ancient Israel, had a dream about angels ascending and descending a ladder between heaven and earth; the dream is recounted in the Old Testament.

ing. For that ascent and descent can only be understood by us to be this: to ascend by humility, to descend through pride. . . .

Now the first grade of humility is this: keeping the fear of God before his eyes, let him avoid forgetfulness and ever remember all the precepts of the Lord; and continually consider in his heart that eternal life which is prepared for those who fear God, just as the mockers of God fall into hell. . . .

The fifth grade of humility is this, if one reveals to the abbot in humble confession all the vain imaginings that come into his heart, and all the evil he has done in secret. . . .

This is the eighth grade of humility; if a monk do nothing except what the common rule of the monastery or the examples of his superior urges him to do.

The ninth grade of humility is this: if a monk keep his tongue from speaking and keeping silence speaks only in answer to questions, since the Scripture says that "sin is not escaped by much speaking," and "a talkative man is not established in the earth."

The tenth grade of humility is this, that he be not easily moved nor prompt to laughter, since it is written: "The fool raiseth his voice in laughter."

The eleventh grade of humility is this: if, when the monk speaks, he says few words and those to the point, slowly and without laughter, humbly and gravely; and be not loud of voice, as it is written: "A wise man is known by his few words."

The twelfth grade of humility is this: that a monk conduct himself with humility not only in his heart but also in his bearing, in the sight of all; that is, in the service of God, in the oratory [chapel], in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the field; and everywhere, sitting or walking or standing, let him always have his head bowed, and his eyes fixed on the ground. Always mindful of his sins, let him think of himself as being already tried in the great judgment, saying in his heart what that publican, spoken of in the gospel, said with his eyes fixed on the earth: "Lord, I a sinner am not worthy to lift mine eyes to the heavens;" and again with the prophet: "I am bowed down and humbled wheresoever I go." . . .

Reading 14

SUMMA THEOLOGICA AND SUMMA CONTRA GENTILES

Saint Thomas Aquinas

For most of the middle ages, religious thought was dominated by the influence of Saint Augustine (d. 430), the greatest of the Latin church fathers (see page 185). Augustine placed little value on the study of nature; for him, the City of Man (the world) was a sinful place from which people tried to escape in order to enter the City of God (heaven). Regarding God as the source of knowing, he held that reason by itself was an inadequate guide to knowledge: without faith in revealed truth, there could be no understanding. An alternative approach to that of Augustine was provided by Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), a friar of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), who taught theology at Paris and later in Italy. Both Augustine and Aquinas believed that God was the source of all truth, that human nature was corrupted by the imprint of the original sin of Adam and Eve, and that God revealed himself through the Bible and in the person of Jesus Christ. But, in contrast to Augustine, Aquinas expressed great confidence in the power of reason and favored applying it to investigate the natural world.

Aquinas held that as both faith and reason came from God, they were not in opposition to each other; properly understood, they supported each other. Because reason was no enemy of faith, it should not be feared. In addition to showing renewed respect for reason, Aquinas—influenced by Aristotelian empiricism (the acquisition of knowledge of nature through experience)—valued knowledge of the natural world. He saw the natural and supernatural worlds not as irreconcilable and hostile to each other, but as a continuous ascending hierarchy of divinely created orders of being moving progressively toward the Supreme Being. In constructing a synthesis of Christianity and Aristotelianism, Aquinas gave renewed importance to the natural world, human reason, and the creative human spirit. Nevertheless, by holding that reason was subordinate to faith, he remained a typically medieval thinker.

In the opening reading from his most ambitious work, the *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas asserts that reason by itself is insufficient to lead human beings to salvation. Also included in this grouping is a selection from another work, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, a theological defense of Christian doctrines that relies extensively on natural reason.

Summa Theologica

Whether, Besides the Philosophical Sciences, Any Further Doctrine Is Required?

It was necessary for man's salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God, besides the philosophical sciences investigated by human reason. First, because man is directed to God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason. . . . But the end must first be known by men who are to direct their thoughts and actions to the end. Hence it was necessary for the salvation of man that certain truths which exceed human reason should be made known to him by divine revelation. Even as regards those truths about God which human reason can investigate, it was necessary that man be taught by a divine revelation. For the truth about God, such as reason can know it, would only be known by a few, and that after a long time, and with the admixture of many errors: whereas man's whole salvation, which is in God, depends upon the knowledge of this truth. Therefore, in order that the salvation of men might be brought about more fitly and more surely, it was necessary that they be taught divine truths by divine revelation. It was therefore necessary that, besides the philosophical sciences investigated by reason, there should be a sacred science by way of revelation.

In the next selection, Aquinas uses the categories of Aristotelian philosophy to demonstrate through natural reason God's existence.

Whether God Exists?

The existence of God can be proved in five ways.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is moved is moved by another, for nothing can be moved except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is moved; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same

respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, *i.e.*, that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is moved must be moved by another. If that by which it is moved be itself moved, then this also must needs be moved by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and, consequently, no other mover, seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are moved by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is moved by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.

The second way is from the nature of efficient cause. In the world of sensible things we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or one only. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate, cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore, it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to be corrupted, and consequently, it is possible for them to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which can not-be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything can not-be, then at one time there was nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist begins to exist only through something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence—which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, nor not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

The fourth way is taken from the graduation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like. But *more* and *less* are predicated of different things according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hottest according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest, and, consequently, something which is most being, for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being. . . . Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus, as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things. . . . Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they

achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

The next reading shows Aquinas' great respect for reason. He defines a human being by the capacity to regulate actions through reason and will.

Does Man Choose with Necessity or Freely?

Man does not choose of necessity. . . . For man can will and not will, act and not act . . . can will this or that, and do this or that. The reason for this is to be found in the very power of the reason. For the will can tend to whatever the reason can apprehend as good. Now the reason can apprehend as good not only this, viz., *to will* or *to act*, but also this, viz., *not to will* and *not to act*. Again, in all particular goods, the reason can consider the nature of some good, and the lack of some good, which has the nature of an evil; and in this way, it can apprehend any single one of such goods as to be chosen or to be avoided. . . . Therefore, man chooses, not of necessity, but freely.

In the following selection Aquinas stresses the necessity of assenting to the truths of faith even if they are beyond the grasp of reason.

Summa Contra Gentiles

Another benefit that comes from the revelation to men of truths that exceed the reason is the curbing of presumption, which is the mother of error. For there are some who have such a presumptuous opinion of their own ability that they deem themselves able to measure the nature of everything: I mean to say that, in their estimation, everything is true that seems to them so, and everything is false that does not. So that the human mind, therefore, might be freed from this presumption and come to a humble inquiry after truth, it was necessary that some things should be proposed to man by God that would completely surpass his intellect.

A still further benefit may also be seen in what Aristotle says in the *Ethics*. There was a certain Simonides who exhorted people to put aside the knowledge of divine things and to apply their talents to human occupations. He said that "he who is a man should know human things, and he who is mortal, things that are mortal." Against Simonides Aristotle says that "man should draw himself towards what is immortal and divine as much as he can." And so he says in the *De animalibus* that, although what we know of the higher substances is very little, yet that little is loved and desired more than all the knowledge that we have about less noble substances. He also says in the *De caelo et mundo* that when questions about the heavenly bodies can be given a modest and merely plausible solution, he who hears this experiences intense joy. From all these considerations it is clear that even the most imperfect knowledge about the most noble realities brings the greatest perfection to the soul. Therefore, although the human reason cannot grasp fully the truths that are above it, yet, if it somehow holds these truths at least by faith, it acquires great perfection for itself.

Therefore it is written: "For many things are shown to thee above the understanding of men" (Ecclus. 3:25). . . .

Those who place their faith in this truth, however, "for which the human reason offers no experimental evidence," do not believe foolishly, as though "following artificial fables" (II Peter 1:16). For these "secrets of divine Wisdom" (Job 11:6) the divine Wisdom itself, which knows all things to the full, has deigned to reveal to men. It reveals its own presence, as well as the truth of its teaching and inspiration, by fitting arguments; and in order to confirm those truths that exceed natural knowledge, it gives visible manifestation to works that surpass the ability of all nature. Thus, there are the wonderful cures of illnesses, there is the raising of the dead. . . . [A]nd what is more wonderful, there is the inspiration given to human minds, so that simple and untutored persons, filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit, come to possess instantaneously the highest wisdom and the readiest eloquence. When these arguments were examined [in Roman times], . . . in the midst of the tyranny of the persecutors, an innumerable throng of people, both simple and most learned, flocked to the Christian faith. In this faith there are truths preached that surpass every human intellect, the pleasures of the flesh are curbed; it is taught that the things of the world should be spurned. Now, for the minds of mortal men to assent to these things is the greatest of miracles, just as it is a manifest work of divine inspiration that, spurning visible things, men should seek only what is invisible. Now, that this has happened . . . as a result of the disposition of God, is clear from the fact that through many pronouncements of the ancient prophets God had foretold that He would do this. The books of these prophets are held in veneration among us Christians, since they give witness to our faith.

Reading 15

THE CONQUEST OF ORANGE

Introduction by Constance Bouchard

During the twelfth century “vernacular” literature emerged for the first time, that is, literature written not in the Latin of the church or the schoolroom, but in the everyday spoken language (early forms of French, German, Italian, and so on). Some of the most popular stories were those now called epics, tales of adventure, war, conquest, and often death. Most of these epics had as their heroes semi-legendary, semi-historical figures, usually noble lords and often kings. By creating these larger-than-life characters and placing them in an imaginary past, the authors were able to make comments on their own society.

These marvelous, vaguely-historical figures included King Arthur, Charlemagne, and William of Orange, the hero of the following selection. William was based ultimately on a real person, a great lord who had served Charlemagne for many years and finally retired to a monastery, some three centuries before epics were created about him. There were more than half a dozen different William of Orange epics written in the twelfth century, roughly linked into a “cycle” of stories. This selection tells how William captured the castle of Orange, a real city in southern France, located on the Rhone river, which, according to legend, became his capital.

This particular story is set in the context of conflict between Christians and Muslims. The southern part of France had been dominated by Muslims during the time of the real William, in the eighth and ninth centuries, and in the twelfth century the French knights and nobles who would have enjoyed this story most were also very interested in the conflict between those who followed the two different religions. The twelfth century was the period of the Crusades, when many French knights went to the Holy Land to try to conquer the Muslims who controlled the region, and when many more French knights fought against Muslims in Spain. The person who wrote this story had no trouble making the Muslims into the villains; clearly he saw little use for religious tolerance.

As well as highlighting the differences between Christians and Muslims, as perceived by Christians who actually knew very little about Islam, this story’s plot turns on the power of love. Romantic love, in which people alter their whole life-span after falling for someone, act more nobly and more bravely because of the beloved’s inspiration, and get happily married at the end, may seem normal in America in the twenty-first century, but it was a real novelty in the twelfth century. At the time the William of Orange stories were being written, the knights and nobles who made up their audience mostly took spouses in marriages arranged for them by their

relatives. The presence and power of love in these stories, with its ability to bring together even a Christian and a Muslim, and to inspire both male and female into fearless action, thus had a distinctly subversive quality.

Although most of the stories in the William of Orange cycle were very serious, this one was intended to be funny. Certainly it has moments of tension and danger, but the basic plot of William creeping into a castle in disguise, and his nephew repeatedly blaming him for being about to get them all killed, would certainly have been humorous to those who read this tale or heard it being read. Its humor would not have undercut, and indeed would have strengthened, the author's ideas about courage, religion, and the roles and relations of men and women.

THE CONQUEST OF ORANGE

Guillaume d' Orange

TRANSLATED BY JOAN M. FERRANTE

i

Listen my lords, and may God give you grace,
the glorious son of Holy Mary,
to a good song that I would offer you.

It is not a tale of pride or folly,
or deception plotted and carried out
but of brave men who conquered in Spain.
They know it well, who have been to St. Gilles,
who have seen the relics kept at Brioude,
the shield of William and the white buckler,
and Bertrand's too, his noble nephew.

10

I think that no clerk will belie me,
nor any writing that's found in a book.
They have all sung of the city of Nîmes,
which William holds among his possessions,
the great high walls and the rooms built of stone,
and the palace and the many castles
and by God, he had not yet won Orange!

There are few men who have told it truly,
but I shall tell what I learned long ago,
how Orange was destroyed and undone.

20

This William did, of the bold countenance.
He expelled the pagans from Almeria,
and the Saracens of Eusce and Pincernie,
those of Baudas and of Tabarie.
He took as his wife Orable the queen—
she had been born of a pagan race—
the wife of Tiebaut, king of Africa.

Then she turned to God, blessed Mary's son,
and founded churches and monasteries.
There are not many who could tell you of them.

30

ii

Hear me, my lords, noble knights and worthy,
if it please you to hear a good deed sung,
how Count William took and destroyed Orange
and took to wife the wise Lady Orable,
who had been Tiebaut of Persia's queen.
Before he was able to win her love,
he had, in truth, to suffer great pains,
many days he fasted, and waked many nights.

iii

It was in May, in the early summer,
the woods blossoming, and the meadows green,
the sweet waters withdrawing into streams
and the birds singing sweetly and soft.
One morning Count William arises,
and goes to the church to hear the service.
He comes out when the service is over
and mounts the palace of the heathen Otran,
whom he had conquered by his fierce courage.
He goes to look from the great windows
and gazes far out across the kingdom.
He sees the fresh grass and the rose gardens,
he hears the song-thrush and the blackbird sing,
then he remembers the joy and pleasure
that he used to feel when he was in France.
He calls Bertrand: "Sir nephew, come here.
We came out of France in great poverty,
we brought with us no harpers or minstrels,
or young ladies to delight our bodies.
We have our share of fine well-groomed horses,
and strong chain-mail and gilded helmets,
sharp, cutting swords and fine buckled shields,
and splendid spears fashioned of heavy iron,
and bread and wine and salted meat and grain;
but God confound the Saracens and Slavs
who leave us to sleep and rest here so long
for they have not yet crossed the sea in force,
to give us the chance to prove ourselves.
It tires me to stay so quiet here,
shut up so tight inside these walls,
as if we were all held as prisoners."
His mind is led astray in this folly,

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but before the sun is hid or vespers sung,
 he will be brought news of such a nature
 that he'll be filled with anger and fury.

iv

William stands at the windows in the wind,
 sixty of his Franks in attendance,
 not one of them without new white ermine,
 stockings of silk and cordovan sandals.
 Most of them loose their falcons in the wind.
 Count William, feeling great joy in his heart,
 looks into the valley through the steep mountains; 80
 he sees the green grass, the roses in bloom,
 and the oriòle and the blackbird in song.
 He calls Guielin and Bertrand to his side,
 his two nephews, whom he loves so well:
 "Listen to me, worthy and valiant knights,
 we came from France not very long ago;
 if only we now had a thousand girls,
 maidens from France, with graceful charming forms,
 so that our barons might be entertained,
 and I too might delight in making love; 90
 that would be greatly to my liking.
 We have enough fine chargers, swift and strong,
 sturdy chain-mail and good shining helmets,
 sharp, cutting spears and splendid heavy shields,
 good swords whose hilts are fashioned of silver,
 and bread and wine, cheeses and salted meat.
 God confound the Saracens and Persians
 who do not cross the sea to do battle.
 Our stay inside here starts to weary me,
 for I have no chance to test my courage." 100
 He wanders distracted in his folly,
 but the sun won't set nor will evening come,
 before he is brought such a piece of news,
 that it will make him both angry and sad.

v

William is at the windows on the wall,
 with him there are a hundred Franks and more;
 there is not one who is not clothed in ermine.
 He looks below where the Rhone river roars
 and to the East, where the roadway runs;
 he sees some wretch emerge from the water; 110
 it is Gilbert, from the city, Lenu.
 He was captured on a bridge of the Rhone,
 the Turks, shouting, brought him back to Orange.

Three years they held him in prison there,
 until one morning as the day appeared,
 when it was God's will that he should escape,
 a Saracen untied him by the gate
 and then began to beat and insult him.
 When the knight had as much as he could bear,
 he seized him by the hair and pulled him down;
 with his huge fist, he struck him such a blow,
 that it shattered both his chest and his spine.
 Dead at his feet, he has thrown down his foe.
 Down from the window, now, he throws himself,
 he can no longer be restrained or held.
 From there to Nîmes he comes without a stop,
 he will report such tidings here today
 to our barons, who talk now of trifles,
 that will relieve William of his boredom
 and bring delight with ladies in the nude.

120

130

vi

William the noble is at the window.
 The fleeing captive has crossed the Rhone,
 climbed the hills and gone down the valleys,
 from there to Nîmes, he has not made a stop.
 He enters the gates of the good city
 and finds William beneath the full pine,
 and, in his train, many excellent knights.
 Beneath the pine, a minstrel is singing
 an ancient song, of venerable age.
 It is quite good and it pleases the count.
 And now Gilbert begins to climb the steps;
 William sees him and looks at him closely,
 he is black and dirty and yet he's pale,
 sickly and pallid, tired and thin.
 He thinks he must be Saracen or Slav
 who has been sent from across the sea
 to bring him a message and take one back.
 But then the poor wretch begins to greet him:
 "May the Lord God who made both wine and grain,
 and gives us light and brightness from heaven,
 who made man and woman to walk and speak,
 preserve William, the marquis of the short nose,
 the flower of France and his noble knights,
 the fighters whom I see assembled here!"
 "My good friend and brother, may God bless you!
 But tell us now, do not keep it hidden,
 who taught you to call this William by name?"
 "Sire," he answers, "you will hear the truth now;

140

150

inside Orange I have been a long time,
and could not find any way to escape, 160
until one morning as day was breaking,
it was Jesus' will that I be set free."

And William says: "God be praised for that!

But tell me now, do not hide it from me,
what is your name, in what land were you born?"

"Sire," he says, "you will soon hear the truth,
but I have suffered so much torment and pain,
I have waked through the nights and fasted all day,
it is four days since I have eaten at all."

And William says: "You will have all you wish." 170

The count then summons his chamberlains:

"Bring this man plenty of food to eat,
with bread and wine, mixed with spices and honey,
cranes and geese, and peacocks with pepper."

And this was done, as he had commanded.

When he has been richly entertained,
he sits willingly at the feet of the count
and begins to relate the news he brought.

vii

Count William has seen the strange messenger,
he summons him and then asks this question: 180

"Where were you born, friend, and in what country?

What is your name, where in France have you been?"

Gilbert replies, a most valiant knight:

"I am Guion's son, the Duke of Ardennes,
and of Vermendois, which he also holds.

Through Burgundy I came from Alemaigne,

I set sail on the waters of Lausanne,

but a wind caught me and a great tempest
and carried me to the port of Geneva.

Pagans captured me at Lyons on the Rhone 190
and led me off to the port at Orange.

There's no fortress like it from here to the Jordan;

the walls are high, the tower large and wide,

the courtyards, too, and the whole enclosure.

Twenty thousand pagans armed with lances,

seven score Turks, bearing standards—

the city of Orange is guarded well,

for they're afraid that Louis will take it,

and you, sweet lord, and the barons of France.

There's Aragon, a rich Saracen king, 200

the son of Tiebaut, of the land of Spain,

and lady Orable, a noble queen;

there is none so lovely from here to the East,

a beautiful body, slender and fine;
 her skin is white, like a flower on the stem.
 God, what good is her body or her youth,
 she doesn't know God, our father almighty!"
 "It's true," says William, "their power is great,
 but by Him, in whom I have placed my faith,
 I shall not bear shield or lance any more
 if I do not manage to meet them soon."

210

viii

Count William has listened to the baron
 who is sitting beside him on the step;
 he addresses him and speaks with affection:
 "Fair brother, friend, you have told quite a tale.
 Did the Saracens keep you long in prison?"
 "Yes, they did, sire, three years and fifteen days,
 and there was no way for me to escape
 until one morning when God gave us day,
 a Saracen, evil and arrogant,
 wanted to beat me, as he had each day.
 I seized him by the hair on his forehead,
 struck him so hard on the neck with my fist,
 that I shattered all the bones of his throat.
 Then I escaped through the window, alone,
 so that not one of the enemy saw.
 To Beaucaire, the port at Oriflor, came
 Turks and Persians, the king of Aragon,
 the elder son of King Tiebaut the Slav;
 he is large and heavy and strong and tall,
 his head is broad and his brow bound with iron,
 his nails are long and pointed and sharp,
 there is no tyrant like him under the world's cloak.
 He murders our Christians and destroys them.
 Whoever could win that city and tower
 and put to death the treacherous villain,
 he would have spent his labor very well."

220

230

ix

"Good brother, friend," says Count William the brave,
 "Is Orange really as you have described?"
 Gilbert answers: "It is even better.
 If you could see the principal palace,
 how high it is and enclosed all around,
 as you look at it from any view;
 if you were there the first day of summer,
 you would hear the birds as they sing there then,

240

the falcons' cry and the moulting goshawks,
the horses' whinny and the braying mules
that entertain and delight the Saracens.

The sweet herbs smell most fragrant there,
spices and cinammon which he had planted.

250

There you might see the fair Lady Orable
who is the wife of Sir Tiebaut the Slav;
there is no one so fair in all Christendom,
nor in pagan lands wherever you seek.

Her body is lovely, slender and soft,
and her eyes change color like a moulting falcon,
but of what use is all her beauty
when she does not know God and his goodness?

A noble man could be well pleased with her,
she could be saved if she wished to believe."

260

Then William says: "By the faith of St. Omer,
good brother, friend, you sing her praises well.

But by Him who has all mankind to save,
I will not carry lance or shield again
if I don't win the lady and the city."

x

"Good brother, friend, is Orange then so rich?"

The fugitive answers: "God help me, my lord,
if you could see the palace of the city
with its many vaults and its palisades,

as it was built by Grifon of Almeria,
a Saracen of most marvelous vice.

270

No flower grows from here to Pavia
that is not painted there in gold artfully.

Within is Lady Orable, the queen,
the wife of King Tiebaut of Africa.

There is none so lovely in all pagandom,
her body is beautiful, slender and fine,
her skin is as white as the flower of the thorn,
her eyes bright and hazel and always laughing;

But what good is her gay spirit to her
when she doesn't know God, blessed Mary's son."

280

"You have set," William says, "great worth on her,
and by the faith that I owe to my love,

I shall eat no more bread made from flour,
no salted meat, I shall drink no more wine,
until I have seen how Orange is set.

And I must see that tower of marble,
and Lady Orable, the gracious queen.

Love of her has me so in its power,

that I could not describe or conceive it.
 If I can't have her soon, I shall lose my life."
 The fugitive says: "This idea is insane,
 if you were now inside that palace
 and could see the vast Saracen array,
 God confound me, if I thought I should live
 long enough to see such a thing achieved.
 Best let it be, the whole idea is mad."

290

xi

Count William listens to the troubled words
 that the fugitive has spoken to him.
 He summons the people of his country:
 "Give me advice, noble men of honor.
 This poor wretch has praised a city to me,
 I was never there, I don't know the land.
 But the Rhone runs here, a swift, moving stream,
 except for it I should have gone by now."
 The fugitive says: "This whole plan is mad.
 If you had a hundred thousand with swords,
 with beautiful weapons and golden shields,
 and you wished to engage the enemy,
 if there'd been no water or obstacle
 before you could even enter the gates,
 a thousand blows of the sword would be struck
 and belts would be torn and many shields pierced
 and many fine men struck down in the streets.
 Let it all be, it is madness to try."

300

310

xii

"Look here," William says, "You have disturbed me,
 you have just told me about this city
 that no count or king possesses its like
 and you would prevent me from going there.
 By St. Maurice, who is sought at Amiens,
 I tell you, you shall accompany me,
 and we shall not take horses or palfreys
 or white chain-mail or helmets from Amiens,
 no shield or lance or Poitevin spears—
 but javelins, like greedy fugitives.
 You have spoken enough Turkish in that land
 and African, Basque and Bedouin tongues."
 The wretch hears him, imagine how he feels—
 he wishes he were at Chartres or Blois
 or at Paris in the land of the king,
 for he does not know how to get out of this.

320

330

xiii

Now William is angry and filled with wrath,
 his nephew Bertrand undertakes to speak:
 "Uncle," he says, "give up this madness,
 if you were now in that city's palace
 and you could look at those Saracen hordes,
 you would be known by your bump and your laugh,
 they would quickly suspect that you were a spy.
 Then, I'm afraid, you'd be brought to Persia,
 they would not feed you on bread or flour,
 nor would they wait long before they killed you;
 they would throw you into a stone prison,
 and you wouldn't come out again in your lives
 until King Tiebaut of Africa came
 and Desramé and Golias of Bile,
 they would sentence you however they wished.
 If, because of love, you come to judgment,
 the people of your kingdom will say
 that you were cursed for the sight of Orable the queen."
 "Look," says William, "I have no fear of that
 for, by the apostle sought in Galicia,
 I would far rather die and lose my life
 than go on eating bread made from flour
 or salted flesh and fermented wine.
 Instead I shall see how Orange is set
 and Gloriete with its marble tower
 and lady Orable, the gracious queen.
 The love of her torments and governs me—
 a man in love is reckless and a fool."

340

350

xiv

Now William is troubled about Orange,
 his nephew Bertrand begins to chide him:
 "Uncle," he says, "you'll bring shame on yourself
 and dishonor, and have your limbs torn off."
 "Look," says the count, "that is not what I fear,
 a man who's in love is completely mad.
 I would not give up, though I lose my limbs,
 not for any man who might beg me to,
 going to see how Orange is set,
 and Lady Orable, so worthy of praise.
 Love for her has so taken hold of me
 I can't sleep in the night or take any rest,
 I am unable to drink or to eat
 or carry arms or to mount on my horse
 or go to mass, or to enter a church."

360

370

He orders ink ground up in a mortar
and other herbs that the baron knew of;
he and Gilbert, who does not dare leave him,
paint their bodies in front and behind,
their faces and their chests, even their feet,
so they resemble devils and demons.

380

Guielin says: "By St. Riquier's body,
you have both been transformed by a miracle,
now you could wander throughout the world,
you wouldn't be recognized anywhere.
But, by the apostle who's sought in Rome,
I would not give up, though I lose my limbs,
going with you to see how it will be."

With the ointment he too is painted and swabbed;
there are the three all prepared to set forth,
they take their leave and depart the city.

390

"God," says Bertrand, "good and righteous father,
how we have been deceived and betrayed!
In what madness was this affair begun
which will bring us all dishonor and shame,
if God does not help, who must judge us all."

xv

William goes forth, the marquis of the fierce look,
with brave Gilbert and the proud Guielin.

Count Bertrand has already turned back
but these go on without further delay.

Below Beaucaire they have found the Rhone
and at Dourance they've crossed over it.

400

Thereabouts they begin to swim quietly,
they cross the Sorgues without barge or ship.

By Aragon, they have gotten across;
straight towards the walls and moats of Orange
the high halls and the fortified palace
adorned with golden pommels and eagles.

Inside they can hear the little birds sing,
the falcons cry and the moulting goshawks,
the horses whinny and the braying mules,
and the Saracens entertained in the tower,
the soft fragrance of spices and cinammon,
all the sweet herbs they have in plenty.

410

"God," says William, "who gave me life and breath,
what wealth there is in this wondrous city!"

How rich he must be who possesses it."

They do not stop until they reach the gate
and then Gilbert addresses the porter

in his own tongue, he speaks courteously:

“Open these gates, porter, let us come in,
we are interpreters from Africa
and men of King Tiebaut the Slav.” 420

The porter says: “I have not heard of you.

What people are you who call me out there?

King Aragon is not yet awake,

and I do not dare to open the gate,

so much do we fear William of the short nose,
who captured Nîmes with such violent force.

You remain here, I shall go to the king;

if he commands, then I’ll let you enter.” 430

“Go right away,” says the baron William,

“quickly so that we lose no more time.”

The porter leaves without any delay,

he climbs the marble steps of the palace.

He finds Aragon seated by a pillar,
surrounded by his Saracens and Slavs.

Courteously he begins to address him:

“Sire,” he says, “listen to this report:

at the gate there are three honorable Turks
who claim to be from Africa beyond the seas.” 440

“Then go, good brother, and let them come in;

there are many things I should like to ask
about my lord who has waited so long.”

And so he runs back to open the gate.

Now William has gotten inside Orange,

with him Gilbert and the worthy Guielin.

They will not get out once the gates are shut
before they have suffered distress and pain.

xvi

Now William has gotten inside Orange

with Guielin and the noble Gilbert. 450

They are disguised by alum and black dye,
so that they look like Saracen tyrants.

In the palace they find two Saracens,

they call to them and speak their idiom,

one tells the other: “They’re from Africa,

today we shall hear some good news from there.”

But Count William keeps walking straight ahead,
towards the palace of the Persian Tiebaut.

The columns and the walls are built of marble

and the windows sculpted of fine silver; 460

a gold eagle sparkles and shines.

The sun doesn’t enter, nor a breath of wind.

"God," says William, "redeemer and father—
 who ever saw such a splendid palace!
 How rich he must be, the lord of this hall,
 would it were God's will, who formed all mankind,
 that I had with me my palatine Bertrand,
 and all the ten thousand Frank warriors!
 We would bury the unlucky Saracens.
 I would kill a good hundred before noon."
 He finds Aragon beside a column
 and around him fifteen thousand Persians.
 William is dead, if he can't deceive them.
 Now you shall hear how he speaks to them:
 "Emir and lord, noble and valiant knight,
 Mohammed greets you and the God Tervagant."
 Says the emir: "Baron, you may approach.
 Where are you from?" "The African kingdom
 of your father, the mighty king Tiebaut.
 Yesterday morning as nones was sounded,
 we got to Nîmes, the strong and rich city,
 where we expected to find King Otran
 and Sinagon and the tyrant Harpin.
 But William had killed him, with his Frank troops;
 our men were murdered, bleeding and torn.
 He put the three of us in his prison, too,
 but he is so rich in family and friends
 that somehow we were allowed to escape.
 We don't know how—may the devil take him!"
 Aragon says: "How sad this makes me.
 By Mohammed, in whom I believe,
 if I had William in my power now,
 he would be dead and suffering torment,
 his bones and ashes scattered to the winds."
 William hears him and he lowers his head.
 He wishes that he were at Paris or Sens;
 he calls on God, his merciful father:
 "Glorious sire, who has formed all mankind,
 who was born of the Virgin in Bethlehem,
 if the three kings came in search of you
 and if you were hung on the cross by tyrants,
 and by the lance, you were pierced in the side—
 Longinus did it, who could not see—
 and blood and water ran down from the point;
 he rubbed his eyes and the light was restored.
 If this is true, just as I have told it,
 guard our bodies against death and torment.
 Don't let Saracens or Persians kill us!"

470

480

490

500

xvii

William is in the palace at the tower.
 He calls his other companions to him
 quietly, so the pagans cannot hear: 510
 "My lords," he says, "we shall be in prison
 if God does not help by His most holy name."
 "Uncle William," Guielin answers him,
 "Noble lord, sire, you came here seeking love,
 you see Gloriete, the palace and tower,
 why don't you ask where the ladies are kept.
 You might well find a way to deceive them."
 And the count says: "You are right, my young squire."
 Now King Aragon begins to question him: 520
 "Baron, when were you in Africa?"
 "My dear lord, no more than two months ago."
 "Did you see King Tiebaut of Aragon?"
 "Yes, my good lord, when he was at Vaudon.
 He embraced us and sent you this message,
 that you maintain his honor and city.
 Where is his wife? Will you show her to us?"
 "Of course, my lords," says the king Aragon.
 "There is none lovelier up to the clouds.
 But barons," he adds, "I have need of my father; 530
 the Franks are taking our castles and towers.
 William is the one, with his two nephews.
 But, by Mohammed's and Tervagant's faith,
 if I now held William in my prison,
 he would soon be burned in fire and coals,
 his bones and ashes scattered through the air."
 William hears him, he holds his head down
 and wishes he could be at Reims or Laon.
 He calls on God and His glorious name:
 "Glorious father, who made Lazarus, 540
 and became incarnate in the Virgin,
 preserve my body from death and prison.
 Don't let these evil Saracens kill us!"

xviii

Now William is in the noble palace;
 pagans and Saracens call for water,
 the tables are placed, they sit down to eat.
 William sits too and his nephew Guielin;
 they speak softly and hold their heads down,
 they're in great fear that they will be captured.
 King Aragon has them served splendidly. 550
 They have plenty of bread and wine at the meal,

cranes and geese and well-roasted peacocks,
 and other foods I cannot describe.
 There is as much as anyone could wish.
 When they have eaten and drunk to their pleasure,
 the cup-bearers come to take up the cloths.
 Pagan and Saracens start to play chess.
 William hears all the palace resound,
 which is sculpted of green marble and dark,
 he sees the birds and lions depicted: 560
 "God," says the count, "who was hung on the cross,
 who ever saw so splendid a palace!
 If it pleased God, who never deceives us,
 that we had the palatine Bertrand here,
 and the twenty thousand Franks with their arms,
 the pagans would meet a bad end today.
 By my head, I would kill eighty myself."

xix

King Aragon has summoned Count William
 to sit beside him beneath a pillar
 and in his ear he questions him softly: 570
 "Noble Turk," he asks, "now tell me the truth,
 what sort of man is William of the short nose,
 who captured Nîmes with his powerful force
 and murdered King Harpin and his brother?
 He had you thrown into his prison, too."
 And William answers: "You will hear the truth now.
 He is so rich, in pride of possessions,
 that he has no care for gold or silver;
 instead he let us escape for nothing
 except that he made us swear by our laws. 580
 He sent you a message we cannot hide,
 that you flee over seas to Africa,
 you will not see the month of May go by
 before he attacks with twenty thousand men;
 your towers and columns will not save you,
 your magnificent halls, nor your deep moats.
 With iron clubs they will all be destroyed.
 If he captures you, you will suffer torture.
 You will hang from the gallows in the wind."
 Aragon says: "What madness is this— 590
 I shall send overseas to Africa,
 my father will come with his mighty nobles,
 with Golias and the king Desramé,
 Corsolt of Mables, his brother Aceré,
 and Clariau and the king Atriblez
 and Quinzepaumes and the king Sorgalez,

the king of Egypt and King Codroez,
 and King Moranz and the king Anublez,
 and the prince of Sorgremont on the sea,
 my uncle Borreaus and all his sons, 600
 and the thirty kings who were born in Spain.
 Each one will bring twenty thousand armed men
 and we will fight at the walls and the moats;
 William will be dead and go to his end
 and his nephews will be hung from the gallows."
 William hears him and almost loses his mind;
 between his teeth, he answers him softly:
 "By God," he says, "you pig, you are lying,
 instead three thousand Turks will be killed,
 before you conquer or hold Nîmes in fief." 610
 If he had arms to equip himself now,
 he would hold all the palace in terror
 for he can no longer control his rage.

xx

Now William is in the great stone hall:
 "King Aragon," he begins his address,
 "Sire," he says, "will you show me the queen
 whom Africa's emperor seems to love so?"
 Aragon says: "It is madness in him,
 for he is old and his beard is snow-white,
 and she is a young and beautiful girl, 620
 there is none so fair in all pagandom.
 In Gloriete he enjoys his loves—
 better if he loved Soribant of Venice,
 a young bachelor who still has his first beard,
 who knows how to live with arms and pleasure
 better than Tiebaut of Slavonia.
 An old man is mad to love a young girl,
 he is soon cuckolded and driven mad."
 When William hears him he begins to laugh.
 "Tell me," asks William, "you don't love her at all?" 630
 "Not I, certainly, God curse the woman!
 I only wish she were in Africa
 or at Baudas, in Almeria."

xxi

In the palace is William the noble,
 and Gilbert too and the mighty Guielin;
 they go out through the center of the hall,
 led by an unsuspecting pagan,
 to the queen who is so loved by the king.
 Better for them if they would return

beyond the Rhone and go back to Nîmes;
 before evening comes or the sun can set,
 unless God acts with his noble power,
 they will suffer what will cause them sorrow.

640

At Gloriete, they have now arrived,
 of marble are its pillars and walls,
 and the windows sculpted in fine silver,
 the golden eagle, resplendent and bright,
 the sun cannot enter, nor does the wind blow;
 it is beautifully done, pleasant and charming.

In one part of the chamber, inside,
 there is a pine grown in such a way,
 as you shall hear, if that is your wish:
 the branches are long and the leaves are large,
 the flower it bears wond'rously fair;
 it is white and blue, and even red.

650

There's an abundance of carob-trees there,
 spices, cinnamon, galingale, and incense,
 sweet fragrances, of hyssop and allspice.

There sits Orable, the African lady,
 dressed in a gown of marvelous stuff,
 tightly laced on her noble body,
 and sewn along the sides with rich silks,
 and Rosiane, the niece of Rubiant,
 makes a gentle breeze with a silver fan.

660

She is more white than snow in the sunlight,
 she is more red than the most fragrant rose.

William sees her and his blood turns cold,
 he greets her nobly and courteously.

"May that God save you, in whom we believe!"

The queen answers: "Baron, please approach me.

670

Mohammed save you, on whom the world depends."

Beside her, she has them sit on a bench,
 that is sculpted in silver and gold.

Now they can speak somewhat of their wishes.

"God," says William, "this is paradise here!"

Says Guielin: "I've seen nothing finer,

I would like to spend all my life here.

There would never be a reason to leave."

xxii

Now William is seated in Gloriete,
 and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin,
 near the ladies in the shade of the pine.

680

There sits Orable, of the bright face,
 wearing a piece of ermine fur
 and underneath a samite tunic,

tightened with laces on her lovely body.
 William sees her, all his body trembles.
 "God," says William, "it is Paradise here!"
 "If God would help me," Guielin responds,
 "I would remain here most willingly.
 I would not seek either food or sleep."
 Then the noble lady begins to ask:
 "Where are you from, noble and gentle knight?"
 "Lady we are from the Persian kingdom,
 from the land of your husband, Tiebaut.
 Yesterday morning, when day was breaking,
 we were at Nîmes, that marvelous city,
 we expected to find people of our race,
 King Sinagon and Otran and Harpin,
 but Fierebrace had killed all three of them.
 The Franks captured us at the gates of the city
 and led us before the palatine,
 but he is so rich and supported by friends
 that he does not care for silver or gold.
 Instead he let us escape in this way:
 first we had to swear an oath by our laws
 and carry This message which I bring to you,
 that you must flee to the Persian kingdom,
 for you will not see the month of April pass
 before he comes with twenty thousand men.
 The palace and the walls will not save you,
 nor the broad halls, not the strong palisades,
 with iron clubs they will all be destroyed.
 If he captures Aragon the Arab,
 your stepson, the prince that you love so much,
 he will make him die an unpleasant death,
 by hanging or burning in fire and flame."
 The lady hears him and sighs tenderly.

690

700

710

xxiii

The lady listens to the strange message,
 then she asks them, she is anxious to know:
 "My lord barons, I am versed in your tongue.
 What sort of a man is William Fierebrace,
 who captured Nîmes, the palace and the halls
 and killed my men, and is still threatening me?"
 "Indeed," says the count, "he has a fierce heart,
 his fists are huge and his arm is mighty.
 There is no man from here to Arabia
 who, if William strikes him with his sharp sword,
 would not be hacked apart, body and arms,
 straight to the ground drives that sword as it cuts."

720

“Indeed,” says the lady, “this is distressing.
 By Mohammed, he will hold great domains.
 Happy the lady who possesses his heart.”
 Then the villainous pagans come in a crowd;
 today William will find more trouble
 than he has encountered in all his life.
 May God protect him against loss and harm!

730

xxiv

Now William has climbed inside the tower,
 and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin;
 beside the ladies under the pine,
 he sits chatting softly with the queen.
 The treacherous pagans are massed outside
 to watch the barons and look at them.
 Unless God helps, who was hung on the cross,
 today William will be badly abused,
 for there is a pagan, Salatr —
 may He confound him who must save us all—
 one whom the count had captured at N mes,
 but one evening the scoundrel had escaped
 and had fled through the moats and found his way,
 so that he could not be recaptured or found.
 He causes terrible trouble for William,
 as you are about to hear recounted.
 To Aragon, the scoundrel now comes,
 into his ear he pours out a whole tale:
 “By Mohammed, sire, arouse your barons.
 We can avenge now the fierce cruelty
 that would have struck me at the city of N mes.
 You see that strong figure in the tower?
 That is William, the marquis of the short nose,
 and his nephew is the other young knight,
 the third one, who carries the heavy club,
 is the marquis who escaped from here.
 To deceive you, they have donned this disguise,
 for they hope to capture this good city.”
 Aragon asks: “Do you tell me the truth?”
 “Sire,” he answers, “you’ll be sorry if you doubt me.
 That is William who had me imprisoned,
 he would have had me hanging in the wind
 if Mohammed had not protected me.
 This is the day that he’ll be rewarded.”
 Now hear me tell, noble barons and good,
 for the love of God who hung on the cross,
 of that villain, what evil he worked.
 He takes a tunic, made of pure gold,

740

750

760

770

and hurls it straight into William's face,
it strikes William just above the nose,
he is discovered, his color comes off;
his skin is white like a summer flower.

When William sees this, he almost goes mad,
throughout his body the blood runs cold.

780

He calls on God, the king in majesty:

"Glorious father, who must save us all,
who deigned to become flesh in the Virgin,
all for the people whom You wished to save,
You gave up Your body to pain and torment,
to be wounded and injured upon the cross,
as this is all true, lord, in Your goodness,
guard my body from death and destruction.
Don't let the Slavs and Saracens kill us!"

xxv

When Aragon hears what the Slav tells him,

790

that he recognizes the three companions,

he rises to his feet and begins to speak:

"Sir William, your name is well known here,
you'll be sorry you crossed the Rhone, by Mohammed!

You will all be put to dreadful death,
your bones and ashes scattered in the wind.

I would not, for a dungeon filled with gold,
rescue you from death and burning to coals."

William hears him, his color like ashes;

800

he wishes he were at Reims or Laon;

Guélin sees that they can't hide any longer,

he wrings his hands and tears at his hair.

"God," says William, "by Your most holy name,

glorious Father who made Lazarus

and in the Virgin took on human form,

who saved Jonah in the belly of the whale

and Daniel the prophet in the lion's den,

who granted pardon to Mary Magdalene,

brought the body of St. Peter to Rome,

810

and converted his companion, St. Paul,

who was, at that time, a very cruel man,

but then became one of the believers,

together with them he walked in processions,

as this is true, sire, and we believe it,

protect us against death and foul prison.

Don't let treacherous Saracens kill us!"

He has a stick, large and sturdy and long;

with his two hands, he raises it high

and brings it down on the false Salatré,

who had denounced him to King Aragon.
 Right through his head comes the blow of the club,
 so that his brains pour out on the ground.
 "Montjoy!" he cries, "strike ahead, barons!"

820

xxvi

William has all the palace in terror.
 Before the king he has killed a pagan.
 Count William has found himself a club
 that had been brought there to make a fire.
 He runs over to it, swiftly and sweating,
 grabs it in his fists and lifts it high.
 He strikes Baitaime, the reckless pagan,
 a vigorous blow of the club on his skull,
 which causes his brains to fly from his head.
 Before the king he has struck him dead.
 And Gilbert, too, goes to strike Quarre,
 he shoves his club into his stomach
 and forces a good part of it out the side.
 He throws him down before the pillar, dead.
 "Montjoy!" he cries, "barons, come, strike ahead!
 Since we are certainly destined to die,
 let's sell ourselves high as long as we last!"
 Aragon hears; he thinks he will go mad.
 Aloud he cries: "Barons, capture these men!
 By Mohammed, they will be killed straightway
 and tossed and thrown into the Rhone,
 or burned in fire and scattered to the wind."
 Guielin shouts at them "Barons stand aside,
 for by the apostle we seek at Rome,
 you won't take me without paying for it."
 In fierce anger, he brandishes his stick.
 Count William begins to strike with his club
 and Gilbert with his iron-bound cudgel,
 mighty blows the noble barons strike;
 fourteen Turks they have thrown to their deaths
 and so terrified all the others
 that, striking, they chase them out through the gates.
 Then the towers are bolted and shut,
 and by the great chains, the bridge is hauled up.
 May God now help, who was hung on the cross!
 For William is in a dangerous spot,
 and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin,
 In Gloriete where they have been trapped,
 and the Saracens, the raging cowards,
 attack them from outside with no respite.

830

840

850

860

xxvii

The Saracens are fierce and arrogant,
 they attack them by hundreds and thousands,
 throwing their lances and piercing steel darts.
 The Franks defend themselves like noble knights,
 casting those pigs into moats and channels,
 more than fourteen have already fallen.
 The most fortunate has his neck splintered.
 Aragon sees it and begins to rage,
 from sorrow and anger he is nearly mad.
 With a loud, clear voice, he begins to shout:
 "Are you up there, William of the fierce look?"
 The count answers: "Certainly I am here.
 By my prowess I have found good lodging,
 may God help me, who was raised on the cross!"

870

xxviii

Now William has entered Gloriete
 and begun to speak to the Saracens:
 "Damned be he who thinks he can hide!
 I entered this city in order to spy
 and I have deceived and tricked you so well
 that I have chased you out of Gloriete.
 Henceforth you will be guardians of this tower,
 protect it well, your reward will be high!"
 Aragon hears him and begins to rage.
 He summons the Saracens and pagans:
 "Quickly to arms, now, my noble knights.
 The assault must now be begun in force.
 Whoever captures this William for me
 will bear the standard for all my kingdom;
 all my treasures will be open to him."
 When his men hear this they are pleased and encouraged,
 the craven flatterers run for their arms
 and attack William in front and behind.
 The count sees them and nearly goes mad.
 He invokes God, the true and righteous judge.

880

890

xxix

Now William is angered and sorrowful,
 and brave Guielin and the noble Gilbert.
 At Gloriete, where they are trapped inside,
 they are sought by all of that pagan race,
 they throw their lances and piercing steel darts.
 William sees them and nearly loses his mind.
 "Nephew Guielin, what is holding us back?"

900

Never can we hope to return to France,
 if God does not help us, with his power,
 we shall not see cousins or family.”
 But Guielin of the graceful body:
 “Uncle William, you’re speaking to no end.
 Because of your love you made your way here;
 there is Orable, the African lady,
 and none so fair alive in this world.
 Go now and sit beside her on the bench,
 put both your arms around her lovely form
 and don’t be slow to embrace and kiss her,
 for by the apostle penitents seek,
 we shall not have the value of that kiss
 unless it costs twenty thousand silver marks
 and great suffering to all our people.”
 “God,” says William, “your words so incite me
 that I can barely keep my reason.”

910

920

xxx

Count William is now angry and enraged,
 and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin;
 inside Gloriete where they have been trapped
 with the Saracen pagans pressing hard;
 they defend themselves like skillful knights,
 throwing down clubs and huge heavy cudgels.
 Now the queen begins to counsel them:
 “Barons,” she says, “Franks, give yourselves up.
 The villainous pagans hate you fiercely,
 you will soon see them climbing the steps,
 you’ll all be dead, murdered, and dismembered.”
 William hears her, his mind is distraught.
 He runs to the chamber beneath the pine
 and wildly begins to beg the queen:
 “My lady,” he says, “please give me armor,
 for the love of God who was hung on the cross!
 For, by St. Peter, if I live through this,
 you will be richly rewarded for it.”
 The lady hears him and weeps with pity.
 She runs to the chamber without delay,
 to a coffer, which she quickly opens.
 She takes from it a good golden shirt of mail
 and a bright golden helmet, set with jewels;
 William runs to take the things from her,
 and to receive what he has so desired.
 He dons the hauberk and laces the helm,
 and Lady Orable girds on the sword
 which belonged to her lord, Tiebaut the Slav.

930

940

She had not wished any man to have it, 950
 not even Aragon, who wanted it so,
 and was the son of her wedded husband.
 At his neck she hangs a strong polished shield,
 on it a lion wearing a gold crown.
 In his fist he holds a good, heavy lance,
 its standard held by five golden nails.
 "God," says William, "how well armed I am now.
 For God, I beg you to think of the others!"

xxxi

When Guielin sees that his uncle is armed,
 he too runs into the lady's chamber 960
 and calls to her, sweetly begging her aid:
 "Lady," he asks, "by St. Peter of Rome,
 please give me arms, we have such great need."
 "My child," she says, "you are so very young,
 if you live long you will be a brave man.
 But the Vavars and Hongars hate you to death."
 In her chamber she takes out a mail-shirt
 which Isaac of Barcelone had forged—
 there was no sword that could pierce that mail.
 He puts it on and his uncle is glad; 970
 he laces the Alfar of Babylon's helm,
 the first king who had held that city.
 There is no sword that can destroy it
 or knock off a stone or ruby flower.
 She girds the sword of Tornemont of Valsone
 which was stolen from him by thieves at Valdonne,
 and then sold to Tiebaut at Voirconbe;
 he gave a thousand besants for it
 for he hoped to pass it on to his son.
 She girds it at his side, the straps are long, 980
 at his neck she hangs a large, round shield,
 and hands him a lance, my lady of Valronne,
 the handle is large and the blade is long.
 He is well armed and Gilbert as well.
 Today Gloriete will be contested.

xxxii

William and his nephew are now well armed,
 and Gilbert, too, and they all rejoice.
 On his back a strong, double shirt of mail,
 on his head they lace a green barred helmet,
 then they gird a sword of steel at his side, 990
 and they hang a quartered shield from his neck.
 But before he takes the good sharp spear,

the evil pagans have advanced so far
 that they are beginning to mount the steps.
 Count William goes to strike down Haucebier
 and Gilbert, the gate-keeper, Maretant,
 and Guielin goes to attack Turfier.

These three pagans do not escape death;
 they smash the tips of the pointed spears
 so that the splinters shoot up toward the sky.

1000

They are now forced to rely on their swords
 which they are anxious to try out and prove.
 Count William has drawn his sword of steel,
 he strikes a pagan across the back
 and cuts him down like an olive branch.

Down into the palace the two halves fall.

And Gilbert goes to strike Gaifier
 and sends his head flying into the palace.

Guielin too is not at all frightened.

He holds his sword and grasps his good shield;
 whoever he meets is destined to die.

1010

Pagans see him and begin to retreat,
 the craven flatterers take to flight.

The Franks chase them, the noble warriors,
 more than fourteen they've already destroyed,
 and terrified all the others so

that they drive them back out through the gates.

The Franks run to shut them and bolt them;
 by the great chains they have pulled up the bridge
 and attached it fast against the tower.

1020

Now let God think of them who judges all!

Aragon sees it and his mind rages.

xxxiii

Now William is sorrowful and angry
 and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin;
 they are pressed hard by the pagan masses
 who throw their lances and well-turned darts
 and beat down the walls with clubs of iron.

William sees it, he is consumed by rage.

"Nephew Guielin," he asks "what shall we do?

Never, it seems, will we return to France.

1030

Nor will we kiss nephews and relatives again."

"Uncle William, this is useless talk,

for by the apostle who's sought at Rome,

I'll sell myself high before we give up."

They climb down the steps of the tower
 and strike the pagans on their rounded helmets;
 they cut straight through their chests and their chins

until seventeen lie dead in the sand.
 The most fortunate has his lungs cut out.
 When the pagans see this, their hearts tremble,
 they cry aloud to mighty Aragon: 1040
 "Make a truce with them, we'll never get in."
 Aragon hears them, nearly dissolved in rage,
 he swears by Mohammed he will make them pay.

xxxiv

Aragon sees the pagans hesitate,
 he calls them graciously and then he says:
 "Sons of bitches, pigs, you'll be sorry you came.
 You'll never hold fiefs or marches from me,
 you can look for them in fiercer fighting."
 And so they do, the miscreant swine, 1050
 they throw their darts and miserable lances,
 with iron clubs they beat down the walls.
 William sees it, nearly mad with fury:
 "Nephew Guielin, now what can we do?
 We are all dead, and doomed to destruction."
 "Uncle William, you're talking like a fool,
 for by the apostle we seek in the ark,
 I'll make them pay before pagans get me."
 The points of their spears have all been shattered,
 but each of the three picks up an axe 1060
 which the noble Lady Orable gave them.
 They go out again, bearing new weapons
 and strike the pagans on their red targes,
 cutting straight through to their faces and chests.
 More than fourteen now lie on the marble,
 some of them dead, the others unconscious.
 Never did three men do so much damage.
 Aragon sees it and nearly goes mad.

xxxv

When Aragon sees his people so pressed,
 then he grieves and almost bursts with anger. 1070
 In a clear voice, he cries out to the Franks:
 "Are you up there, William of the fine body,
 the son of Aimeri of Narbonne the great?
 Do something for me that I greatly desire,
 leave Gloriete, the palace, right now
 and go away healthy, safe and alive,
 before you lose all your limbs and your blood.
 If you refuse, you will suffer for it.
 By Mohammed, in whom I believe,
 here in this place, a great pyre will be built, 1080

you will all be burned and roasted in there.”

William answers: “Your talk is for nothing.

We have plenty of bread and wine and cheese
and salted meat and wines, honeyed and spiced,
and white hauberks and green shining helmets,
excellent swords with hilts of silver,
sharp piercing spears and good heavy shields
and lovely ladies to entertain us.

I shall not leave while I am yet alive,
and soon the noble king Louis will know,
my brother Bernard, who is hoary and white,
and the warrior, Garin of Anseune,
and the mighty duke Bueves of Commarch,
my nephew Bertrand, who is brave and valiant,
whom we just left behind us at Nîmes.

1090

Each one of them, whenever he wishes,
can well send twenty thousand warriors.
When they find out what is happening here,
how we are established here within,
they will come to our aid most graciously
with as many men as they can gather.

1100

I tell you, these walls will be no defense,
nor this palace, where gold shines in splendor;
you will see it shattered in a thousand parts.

If they capture you, it will not go easy,
you will be hooked and hung in the wind.”

Aragon says: “We shall grieve all the more.”

Pharaon speaks, the king of Bonivent,
“Emir, sire, you are not worth a glove.

By Mohammed, you have very little sense.

1110

Your father was worthy and valiant,
and he left this city to you to defend,
and the palace, Gloriete, as well.

These three scoundrels who are challenging you
have been killing your men and your people;
by Mohammed, you are not worth much
if you can't burn them in stinking Greek fire.”

xxxvi

“Pharaon, sir,” says the king Aragon,
give me better counsel, for Mohammed's sake,
you see Gloriete, the palace and tower,
whose foundation is set so deep and strong.
All the people from here to Moncontor
could not make any opening in it.
Where the devil would we get the coals?

1120

We have no wooden branches or sticks.
 Those three pigs got in there by their arrogance,
 but they won't get out in seven years."

xxxvii

"Pharaon, sir," says the king Aragon,
 "for Mohammed, whose laws we uphold,
 you must advise me immediately. 1130

Behold Gloriete, the splendid palace
 the foundation is laid in solid rock.
 All the men from here to the port of Vauquois
 could not make a hole in its walls in a month.

From what devils could we get the coals
 when we haven't a twig of wood or laurel?
 In their arrogance those three got inside,
 but in seven years, they will not get out."

Now a pagan, Orquenois steps forward,
 his beard is black, but his hair white with age, 1140
 his eyebrows white, if I judge them rightly.

In a loud voice, he cries out three times:

"Emir, sire, will you listen to me,
 and tell me if it would be worth my while
 to deliver William the Frank to you
 so that you might hold him in your prison?"

Aragon answers: "Yes, by my faith.
 Ten mules laden with the best Spanish gold
 I would give to one who could tell me that."

Orquenois says: "Then listen to me. 1150

If you will give me your promise straightway,
 I shall do it, whatever may happen."

Aragon says: "I swear this to you,
 and I pledge faithfully here and now
 that when you wish you shall have those riches."
 The pagan replies: "I give you my word."

xxxviii

Orquenois says: "By Mohammed, sweet lord,
 I shall tell you how to take him with guile:
 there is Gloriete, the marble tower,
 its foundation set well in the stone. 1160

It was built by Grifaigne of Almeria,
 a Saracen of great cleverness.
 You never knew what tricks they had designed:
 Beneath the earth, a solitary vault,
 a portcullis into your palace.
 Take a thousand Turks and go there yourself

to lay a siege at the front of the tower
 and attack at the same time from behind.
 William will soon be dead and in torment."
 Aragon says: "By Mohammed, that's true.
 You'll be rich for this, by my lord Apollo!"

1170

xxxix

When Aragon has learned of this secret,
 that there is a cave in the earth beneath him,
 his joy is such that it makes his heart leap.
 He takes a thousand Turks, their helmets laced,
 and another thousand he leaves in front
 to keep up the siege of Guielin and William;
 the others turn round and go quickly
 not stopping until they reach the entrance,
 carrying candles and lanterns along.
 They enter the cave, that foul hostile race.
 The honorable knights know nothing of them
 until they're already inside the palace.
 William is the first to find out they are there.
 "God," says the count, "glorious in heaven,
 we are all dead and delivered to pain."
 Guielin says: "By St. Hilaire's body,
 as God helps me, Orable has betrayed us.
 May God confound the whole Saracen race!"

1180

xl

Count William sees the palace being filled
 with Saracens who come there in anger;
 he sees the hauberks and the helmets shine.
 "God," says the count, "who never deceives us,
 we are all dead and doomed to destruction."
 "In faith, my good lord," answers Guielin,
 "we were betrayed by Orable the fair.
 May God confound pagans and Saracens!
 This is the day that we must meet our end.
 Let us help ourselves, as long as we can,
 for we have no friends or relatives here."
 Count William brandishes the sword of steel,
 in fury he moves to strike a pagan
 back-handed and cuts him straight through the middle.
 The pagans are terrified by this blow.
 They rush at him enraged and distressed.
 They defend themselves like emboldened knights;
 he strikes great blows, the count palatine.
 The assault is fierce and the slaughter great,
 but it won't end until they're defeated.

1190

1200

No battle was ever fought so well. 1210
 In their defense they have killed thirty Turks.
 Who cares, if they can never finish them!
 The pagans and Saracens lay hold of him,
 Turks and Persians and the Almoravi,
 Acoperts, Esclamors and Bedouins;
 by Mohammed they swear vengeance will be had.
 They will avenge the death of their friends.

xli

William is captured by deadly treason
 and with him Gilbert and the brave Guielin.
 The Saracen villains have them in their hands 1220
 and swear by Mohammed to take revenge.
 They send twenty boys into the city
 to dig a ditch that will be wide and deep,
 and to fill it with kindling wood and twigs
 for they intend to grill our barons.
 Orable comes, she is fair of visage,
 and addresses her stepson Aragon:
 "My friend," she says, "give these prisoners to me,
 I shall place them in my deepest dungeon,
 where toads and adders will feed on them 1230
 and small serpents will devour them."
 "My lady, queen," says the king Aragon,
 "you were the cause of this trouble
 when you armed these treacherous swine up there.
 Damned be the man who would give them to you!"
 The lady hears him and trembles with rage.
 "You'll be sorry for that, you bastard pig!
 By Mohammed, whom I praise and adore,
 if it were not for these other barons,
 I would strike you on the nose with my fist. 1240
 Get yourself out of my tower quickly,
 if you stay longer you will regret it."
 She addresses the treacherous villains:
 "Vile thieves," she says, "put them in your prison
 until Tiebaut returns from Valdon,
 and Desramé and Golias the blond.
 They will take the vengeance they desire."
 "I swear it, lady," says King Aragon,
 William is cast into the deep dungeon,
 and Guielin and the valiant Gilbert. 1250
 For a while we must let our barons be;
 when it is time we will come back to them.
 Now we must sing of the pagan people.

xlii

King Aragon does not rest with his deed,
 he sends his messengers over the seas
 and they depart, without pause or halt,
 from here to the Rhone they don't rest or stop,
 and there they embark on a galley,
 on the ship of Maudoine of Nubie.

It is artfully covered with silk,
 and does not fear a storm or tempest.
 They lift their anchor and hoist their sails,
 they take to sea, leave the city behind,
 they glide and skim and they steer and they sail,
 they have a good wind to carry them straight.

When they reach the port beneath Almeria,
 they drop anchor and lower their sails.

Mounting their horses, they still do not stop.
 They do not pause or rest from their ride
 until they reach the African city.

They dismount in the shade of an olive
 and begin to climb to the great stone hall.

They find Tiebaut and his pagan nation
 and greet him as Saracen custom bids:

"That Mohammed, who holds all in his power,
 preserve King Tiebaut of Esclavonie!

Your son, of the bold look, sends you this plea,
 that you come to his aid with all your knights.

He has captured William, I'll hide nothing,
 the son of Aimeri, from Narbonne the rich,
 inside Orange, the well-protected city;

in disguise he had entered the town,
 intending to take it as he had Nîmes

and make love to Lady Orable.

But their devilish scheme did not succeed.

They gave us a hard time from Gloriete
 which he managed to hold for seven days;
 if it hadn't been for the underground cave

whose stones are set beneath the palace,
 you would no longer possess Orable,

your wife, who is such a noble lady.

But Mohammed sent you aid in your need,
 we have him now in a lonely prison
 from which he will never escape alive.

Vengeance will be taken as you will it."

When Tiebaut hears this he begins to laugh,
 he summons the people of his empire.

"Now quickly to arms, noble knights and free!"
 and they obey without any delay,

1260

1270

1280

1290

mounting horses from Russia and Puglia. 1300
 When Tiebaut leaves the African city,
 he takes with him pagans of Almeria
 and others from Suite and Esclavonie.
 At the head, before him, are sixty thousand.
 They don't pause or rest till they reach the sea.
 In little time the ships are prepared
 with wine and meat and biscuits and grain.
 They embark quickly, that Saracen race,
 raise their anchors and hoist their sails.
 The wind blows hard and drives them straight on, 1310
 they reach the sea; they are on their way.
 Then might you hear such horns and trumpets,
 horses neighing and greyhounds barking,
 braying of mules and whinnying chargers,
 sparrow-hawks crying out on their perches.
 You might hear those sounds from a great distance.
 Eight days they sail, on the ninth they arrive,
 but before they reach Orange the rich,
 Tiebaut will know such sorrow and anger,
 as he has not felt in his life before. 1320
 For he will lose his fortified city
 and his wife, the elegant Orable.

xlili

William is deep inside the prison,
 Gilbert too and the noble Guielin.
 "God," says the count, "Father and redeemer,
 we are dead and abandoned to torment!
 God, if only King Louis knew of it,
 and my brother Bernard, hoary and white,
 and Garin the mighty, of Anseune, 1330
 and Bueves the great warrior of Commarch,
 and my nephew, Bertrand, valiant and brave,
 whom we left behind at the city of Nîmes,
 and all twenty thousand fighting Franks.
 We could derive great comfort from their aid."
 Guielin says, the knight of gracious bearing:
 "Uncle William, there's no point to such words.
 Send for Orable, the African's lady,
 to help, for the love she bears her lover!"
 "God," says William "you have taunted me so,
 it will not take much for my heart to burst." 1340

xliv

Now William is angry and depressed
 and Gilbert too, and the worthy Guielin,

inside the prison where they await death.
 But while they are lamenting their lot,
 Orable suddenly appears at their cell.
 When she sees the counts, she begins to speak:
 "Listen to me, noble, valiant knights,
 pagans and Saracens hate you unto death.
 They intend to hang you tonight or tomorrow."
 "We can do nothing, lady," says Guielin,
 "but consider, noble, gentle lady,
 if we could be let out of this dungeon,
 I would become your man by oath and vow
 and happily I would render service
 whenever you, noble lady, might wish."
 "But," says William, "it is she who betrayed us,
 because of her we are in this dungeon."
 The lady hears him and breathes a sigh.

1350

xliv

"My lord baron," says the gracious Orable,
 "by Mohammed, you accuse me wrongly.
 It was I who armed you in that tower;
 if you could keep fighting in the palace
 until word reaches Louis, the son of King Charles,
 and Sir Bernard of Brabant and the others,
 and Aimeri and all your magnificent line,
 the treacherous swine would not know of it
 until they had reached the marvelous tower,
 and then they'd be able to free this land,
 its narrow passes, its fords and gorges."
 Guielin replies: "Lady, you've spoken well.
 If we were now let out of this prison,
 I should be your man the rest of my life."
 "By my faith," Orable the queen answers,
 "if I thought that my pains would thus be repaid,
 if William Fierebrace promised to take me,
 I would set all three of you free
 and would swiftly become a Christian."
 William hears her, his spirit's restored.
 "Lady," he says, "I shall give you my gage,
 I swear this to you by God and St. James,
 and by the apostle we seek in the ark."
 "Then," says the lady, "I require no more."
 She unlocks all the doors of the prison
 and they leave it, valiant men;
 each of them rejoices in his heart.

1360

1370

1380

xlvi

Now the lady has received the counts' oaths,
and set them free from their prison;
she leads and guides them into Gloriete.

Up in the palace, they sit down to dine.

When they have all been richly feasted,
the noble lady addresses them thus:

1390

"My lords, barons, listen to me now.

I have taken you out of your prison,

I have led you into my palace,

but I do not know how you will escape.

What I have in mind, I had best tell you:

beneath us here, there is a secret cave

which no man yet born of woman knows,

except my ancestor who had it dug;

from here to the Rhone a tunnel was carved.

1400

If you manage to send a messenger

to Count Bertrand and the other barons,

they might come to speak to you underground,

and the infidel pagans would not know

until they had entered the tiled palace

and begun to strike with their broad swords.

In this way they could set the city free

and all its passes, its gorges and moats."

And William says: "My lady, that is so.

But where can we find a messenger."

1410

xlvi

"Nephew Guielin," Count William then says,

from here to Nîmes do not stop or pause,

you must tell your brother Bertrand of us

and bring him to our aid with all his men."

"Uncle William," says Guielin, "what the devil—

may God help me, this must be a joke.

For by the faith I owe to St. Stephen,

I would rather die in this lovely tower

than in sweet France or at Aix-la-chapelle."

xlvi

"Nephew Guielin," says the noble William,

1420

"you must find your way through the cave below,

not stop for a moment from here to Nîmes,

and tell the palatine Bertrand for me

to bring me help immediately."

"Uncle William, there is no point to all this;

I would not desert you, to save my limbs.

I would rather die inside this tower

than in sweet France among my relatives.

Send Gilbert of Flanders instead."

"Will you go, brother?" asks the good William.

1430

And the baron replies: "I shall go, indeed,
and carry your message faithfully."

"Go, then, good brother, I commend you to Jesus,
and tell the palatine Bertrand for me,
that he must help without any delay.
If he does not, by God the redeemer,
he will never see his uncle again."

xlix

When the messenger hears that he must go,
then he begins to rage and wonder
how he can ever escape from there.

1440

"I've never been there, I don't know where to go."

But the lady says: "I shall guide you there.

You need not fear any man born of woman,
except Jesus Christ, the almighty lord."

Next to a pillar she has a stone moved,
which measures a fathom in length and width.

"My brother," she says, "you can enter here.

At its head, you will find three pillars,
formed and designed with vaulted archways."

He leaves them and begins to wander,
not knowing where, underneath the city.

1450

Count William accompanies him quite far
with lady Orable and baron Guielin.

They do not stop until the three pillars;
through their midst, he reaches the outside
and comes to the Rhone where he finds a boat;
then he moves softly across the water.

Count William has already turned back
with Guielin and Orable of the bright face;

All three of them have entered Gloriete.

1460

It would have been better if they had gone on
and descended to the dungeon below,
for not a thing have they done and plotted
that was not overheard by a pagan
who goes to tell it to King Aragon.

l

This Saracen is evil and deceitful,
he goes to denounce them to King Aragon;
as soon as he sees him, he starts to speak:
"Emir and lord, grant me peace and listen
to what your stepmother has been plotting

1470

with the captives whom you held in your prison.
 She has taken them all out of the dungeon
 and conducted them up to the palace;
 in Gloriete they sat down to a meal."

Aragon asks: "Is this true, messenger?"

"Sire," he answers, "I am not a liar,

I have seen them taking secret counsel
 and kissing and embracing one another.

She loves them more, and William in bed,
 than your father or the king Haucebier."

1480

Aragon hears and almost loses his mind;
 he summons his Saracens and Slavs.

"Barons," he says, "give me counsel on this,
 tell me in what way I ought to proceed
 against my stepmother who has shamed me,
 disgraced me and dishonored my father."

li

Aragon says: "Good and powerful knights,
 by Mohammed, gather up all your arms.

Whoever now takes armor and weapons
 will pay for it before we capture them."

1490

His men answer: "Just as you command."

Fifteen thousand men rush to arm.

God, what trouble when William finds out,
 and Lady Orable and brave Guielin.

In Gloriete where they are hidden,
 they play at chess, in all confidence;

they suspect nothing, the noble counts,
 when the Slavs and Saracens fall on them.

lii

Aragon finds William beneath the pine,
 and Lady Orable and bold Guielin;

1500

the palatine counts know nothing of it
 until they are taken by Saracens,

Turks and Persians and evil Bedouins.

By Mohammed they swear they'll have revenge;

Pharaon says, he lays claim to finesse,

"Emir and lord, listen to what I say.

Tiebaut your father is brave and noble,
 who left this city to you to protect,

and Gloriete the royal palace.

These swine have dared to challenge you for it,
 they have murdered your men, hacked and killed them.

1510

By Mohammed, I am not worth a cent,

if I do not have all their limbs torn off;

and your stepmother, who has shamed you so,
I shall see burn and roast in a fire."

But Escanors, who is white-haired and old:
"King Pharaon, you have not spoken well."

liii

Says Escanors, who is hoary and old:
"King Pharaon, you have not judged this well.

You ought never engage in such folly.

1520

If it once starts, you cannot control it.

Emir, my lord, grant me peace and hear me:

Tiebaut your father is a noble man,

he left this city to you to protect,
and Gloriete, the palace and the fief.

If you were really to burn his lady,
he would only be furious with you.

But have these counts thrown back into prison
and put lady Orable in with them.

Then send a messenger over the seas;

1530

your father will come, with King Haucebier,
and let them decide how they'll be avenged."

Aragon says: "You have spoken well.

You'll be rewarded, you will lack nothing.

But I have already sent a messenger
to my father, the king who rules Africa.

Within eight days he should have returned."

They throw William into prison again
with Guielin, who is bold and skillful.

and Lady Orable is cast in with them.

1540

God save them now, who is judge of us all!

liv

Now William has been cast into prison

with Guielin and the gracious Orable;

the unhappy lady cries in despair.

"God," she says, "our good, heavenly father,
this poor creature has not been baptized yet.

I hoped to become one of God's faithful.

Sir William, your valor has brought me harm,
your noble body and knightly honor,

for you I've been thrown into this dungeon,
in anguish as if I had been a whore."

1550

Guielin says: "What nonsense is this,

you and my uncle are not badly off;

through your great love, you should bear this trouble."

William hears him and rages with anger,

in his fury, he swears by St. James:

"If it were not to my shame and disgrace,
 I would give you a good blow on the neck."
 Guielin says: "That would only be madness.
 From now on I shall say, no matter who hears, 1560
 you used to be called William the strong-armed,
 but now you will be William the lover.
 It was for love that you entered this town."
 The count hears him, he looks down at the ground.

lv

Now William is furious and distressed,
 and lady Orable and Guielin his nephew,
 inside the dungeon where they have been thrown.
 "God," says the count, "glorious king of heaven.
 We are all dead, betrayed and deceived!"
 "What folly it was to start this affair, 1570
 by which we are all dishonored and shamed,
 unless He, who judges all, rescues us.
 Alas, if King Louis the fierce only knew,
 my brother Bernard, the white-haired and old,
 and valiant Sir Garin of Anseune,
 and within Nîmes, the powerful Bertrand.
 We certainly have great need of their aid."
 "Uncle William," says the fierce Guielin,
 "let that be, we have no need of them here.
 Here is Orable, the gracious lady, 1580
 for you to kiss and embrace as you wish,
 I can think of no lovelier lady."
 "God," says the count, "now I shall go mad."
 The pagans hear them quarrel in the prison,
 more than forty, they rush in and seize them
 and throw the two men out of their dungeon.
 They leave Orable, the gracious lady,
 but lead uncle and nephew to the palace.
 Pharaon speaks, who is fiercest of all:
 "Emir, sire, grant me peace and hear me. 1590
 Your father, Tiebaut, must be respected.
 He left this city to you to protect
 and Gloriete, the palace and the fief.
 You see this pig, this young bachelor,
 nothing you say does he hold worth a cent.
 By Mohammed, you're no more than a clown
 if you do not have him torn limb from limb,
 him and his uncle, William, the warrior."
 Guielin hears him, his sense begins to stray,
 he grinds his teeth, his eyes roll in his head; 1600
 he steps forward, he has pulled his sleeves back;

with his left fist, he grabs him by the hair,
 raises the right and plants it on his neck.
 The bone in his throat is almost shattered.
 He lets the pagan fall, dead, at his feet.
 William watches and rejoices in it.
 "God," says the count, "who are judge of us all,
 now we are dead and abandoned in pain!"

lvi

William sees Pharaon who has fallen:
 "God," says the count, "good king of paradise,
 now we are dead, and given up to pain." 1610
 "Do not despair, uncle," says Guielin,
 "in this palace you are not without friends."
 "Indeed," says William, "there are few of those."
 Then the young Guielin looks around.
 He notices a huge axe near a pillar,
 moves forward and seizes it with both hands,
 and goes to strike a barbarous pagan.
 He cuts through him all the way to the chest.
 Aragon looks, almost loses his mind, 1620
 he cries aloud: "Seize him, Saracens!
 By Mohammed, they shall be abused,
 they will be swung and dropped into the Rhone."
 Guielin says: "You swine, get away from here.
 You have had us led out of your prison
 and conducted up here to the palace,
 but by the apostle who is blessed at Rome,
 you have thus acquired such companions,
 they'll make you angry and very sad."
 At these words two Saracens appear, 1630
 bearing in their hands a serving of wine,
 which they intend to serve in the palace,
 but when they see such mighty blows struck,
 they run away and let everything fall.
 Count William runs to seize the huge tray.
 Swiftly, he takes it in both his hands
 and strikes great blows at pagan Saracens.
 Anyone he reaches does not rejoice.

lvii

Now William is inside the tiled palace,
 and Guielin his renowned nephew. 1640
 One has an axe, the other the tray;
 the noble vassals strike great blows with them.
 Fourteen Turks have already been killed,
 and the others are so terrified,

that they chase them out through the doors,
which they run to bolt and lock after them.
By its great chains, they have pulled up the bridge.

Aragon sees it and his mind rages.

He calls on all his Saracens and Slavs:

“Give me counsel, by Mohammed, my God.

1650

This William has badly abused me,

he has seized my principal palace,

I don’t see how we can enter again.”

Let us leave the Saracens here for a while,

for we must sing once more of Gilbert,

the messenger who has crossed the Rhone.

He mounts the peaks and descends the valleys,

from here to Nîmes, he has never paused.

It is morning, Count Bertrand has arisen,

he climbs the palace of the heathen Otran

1660

whom he had conquered by his fierce courage.

The count stands at the great windows

and looks down across the kingdom.

He sees the green grass and the rose gardens

and hears the oriole and blackbird sing.

He remembers William of the short nose

and his brother, the highly praised Guielin,

and tenderly then he begins to weep,

grieving for them as you will now hear:

“Uncle William, what madness it was

1670

to go to Orange just to look at it,

disguised in rags like some poor beggar.

Brother Guielin, how worthy you were!

Now you’ve been killed by Saracens and Slavs,

and I am left all alone in this land.

I see no man here of all my great race

to whom I can go for good counsel.

The Slavs will soon return to this place,

Golias and the king Desramé,

Clareaus and his brother Aceré,

1680

Aguisant and the king Giboé,

and the royal prince of Reaumont by the sea,

the kings Eubron, Borreaus and Lorré,

and Quinzepaumes and his brother Gondrez,

the thirty kings who were born here in Spain.

Each one will have thirty thousand armed men

and they will attack the city of Nîmes;

they will capture me by powerful force,

I shall be dead, murdered or killed.

But there is one thing I have determined:

1690

I would not fail, for the gold of ten cities,

to return to the land where I was born,
 and bring back with me all my barons,
 whom William of the short nose once led here.
 And when I come to the city, Paris,
 I will descend on the enameled stones;
 sergeants and squires will come to greet me
 and they will certainly ask for William,
 and for Guielin my worthy brother.
 Alas, I will not know what to tell them,
 except that the pagans killed them at Orange!"
 Twice he falls in a faint on the marble step,
 and his barons run to lift him up.

1700

lviii

Count Bertrand is saddened and desolate,
 for Guielin and the noble William.
 He grieves with fine and courteous words:
 "Uncle William, how madly you acted
 when you decided to go to Orange
 as a poor beggar, disguised in rags.
 Brother Guielin, what a good man you were!
 Now Persians have killed you and Saracens
 and I am alone in this pagan land,
 I have no cousin or brother with me.
 Now King Tiebaut will return from Africa
 and Desramé and the huge Golias,
 the thirty kings with their vast forces,
 and they will lay siege to me here at Nîmes.
 I shall be dead and doomed to torments,
 but by the apostle penitents seek,
 I shall not, even if I lose my limbs,
 give up until I reach Orange the great
 to avenge the sorrow and the torment
 that Saracens made our people suffer.
 Alas, poor wretch, why do I hesitate
 to go and present myself before them!"

1710

1720

lix

Count Bertrand is sad and filled with anger,
 but just when he is weeping and sighing,
 Gilbert arrives and enters the city.
 He climbs the steps of the great stone chamber.
 Bertrand sees him and he begins to laugh,
 in a loud, clear voice he cries out to him:
 "You are most welcome, here, good, noble knight!
 Where is my uncle of the bold countenance,
 and Guielin? Don't hide it from me!"

1730

And Gilbert answers as a noble knight:
 "Within Orange, the fortified city,
 in Gloriete, the tower of marble;
 evil pagans hold them in their power.
 It won't be long before they are both killed.

William sent me, I hide nothing from you, 1740
 to ask you to help with all of your knights,
 immediately, without any delay."

Bertrand hears him, then he begins to laugh.
 He calls on everyone who can hear him:
 "To arms, now, quickly, my good, noble knights!"

And they obey, without any delay,
 mounting their Spanish and Sulian horses.
 When Bertrand leaves the city of Nîmes,
 he brings every man in his command,
 at the head are more than fifteen thousand. 1750

From here to the Rhone they don't pause or stop,
 they all embark on ships and galleys.

The Franks put to sea, they sail and steer.
 Beneath Orange, there is the vast plains,
 the proud companies disembark,
 they pitch their tents and raise their pavilions.

Count Bertrand has allowed no delay,
 he looks at the messenger and says:

"Now, Sir Gilbert, do not lie to me. 1760
 Should we attack this city of Orange,
 can we break down the walls and the stone halls?"

Gilbert answers: "Your idea is mad.
 She does not fear the whole kingdom of France—
 you couldn't take her any day of your life."
 Bertrand hears him and nearly goes mad.

lx

"Gilbert, brother," Count Bertrand demands,
 "shall we attack the mighty Orange,
 could we break down these walls, these high buildings?"

Gilbert answers: "There is no sense in this. 1770
 You could not take her in all your lifetime."

Bertrand is enraged by that answer
 and the messenger tries to comfort him:

"Sire," he says, "listen to my plan:
 I shall get you into the city
 without the Persians or Saracens' knowledge."
 "Go ahead, good brother, with Jesus' aid!"

He goes, because he knows what is needed,
 with thirteen thousand Frankish fighting men,
 leaving the others behind at the tents.

They do not stop before they reach the cave, 1780
through the pillars they make their way in—
they are without candles or burning lights—
one after the other in deep darkness.
Bertrand begins to lose heart at this,
he calls the messenger and asks aloud:
“Gilbert, my brother, don’t conceal the truth,
my uncle is dead, I’m beginning to see,
and you’ve sold us to the infidel race.”
Gilbert answers: “You’re talking nonsense—
I could not do that to save my own limbs. 1790
You will arrive soon inside Gloriete,
by God, I beg you, do it quietly.”
“Go on, good brother, with God’s protection.”
And as they move along, speaking thus,
they suddenly find themselves in Gloriete.
Count William has seen them as they arrive:
“God,” says the count, “good father, redeemer,
now I see what I have needed so long.”
The valiant fighters unlace their helmets,
they embrace and kiss, weeping in their joy. 1800
Count Bertrand is the first to address him:
“How are you, uncle? Hide nothing from me.”
“I’m fine, good nephew, by the grace of God,
though I have suffered great pain and distress.
I didn’t expect to see you while I lived,
for the torments of Saracens and Persians.”
“Uncle William, you will soon be avenged.”
Up in the palace an olifant sounds,
outside in tents and pavilions, men arm.
Count William is bold and valiant. 1810
They approach the gates of the fine city,
the bridge is lowered, they quickly descend
to open the gates as fast as they can,
and the men outside begin to pour in,
shouting “Montjoy!” in the front and the rear.
At their joy, the pagans are terrified,
they run to arm, the treacherous cowards;
from their lodgings they begin to come forth,
running to equip themselves for defense.
But all their armor is not worth a glove, 1820
for there are too many Franks by then;
Bertrand has taken over the city.
To win that strong and valiant fortress,
you might have seen such a furious combat,
so many lances broken and shields crashing,
so many hauberks of Moorish chain pierced,

so many Saracens bleeding and dead.
 When Aragon sees his people killed,
 his grief is such, he almost goes mad.
 He leaps in the saddle of a spirited horse, 1830
 grabbing a shield he had taken from a Frank,
 he looks on the ground and sees a sharp spear,
 he leans down to take it with both his hands
 and urges the horse with his sharpened spurs.
 He thrusts himself in the thick of the fight.
 First he kills our Folquer of Meliant
 and then another and a third after him.
 Bertrand sees him and almost goes mad,
 he draws his sword, whose blade cuts so well,
 and strikes Aragon, he does not spare him. 1840
 The blow he strikes with such vicious intent,
 he cuts through him all the way to his chest.
 He knocks him dead from his spirited horse.
 Pagans begin to lose force and courage.
 But why should I extend this tale further?
 Cursed be he who would have escaped it!
 Over the earth flows a river of blood.
 Count William does not wait any longer,
 he runs immediately to the dungeon
 and frees Orable of the graceful form. 1850
 He calls Bertrand and says this before all:
 "Good nephew," he says, "hear what I intend:
 this lady of the noble, charming form,
 who rescued me, certainly, from death,
 I made her a most faithful promise
 that I would indeed take her as my wife."
 And Bertrand says: "Then why do you delay?
 Keep the covenant you have made with her,
 and marry her in happiness and joy."
 "Nephew," says William, "just as you command." 1860

lxi

Count William is most noble and worthy.
 When he has conquered the city by force,
 he has a great vessel prepared
 and clear water is poured into it.
 Then comes the bishop of the city, Nîmes;
 they have Orable take off her robes,
 and baptize her to the honor of God,
 divesting her of her pagan name.
 The barons, Bertrand and Guielin, sponsor her
 and Gilbert, the worthy and wise. 1870
 By Christian law, they call her Guiborc.

To a church consecrated by them,
where Mohammed had once been invoked,
Count William goes to make her his wife.
The mass is sung by the bishop Guimer.
After the mass they return from the church
and the lady is led into Gloriete,
in the paved halls the wedding is splendid.
Count Bertrand serves them as is fitting,
and Gilbert and the worthy Guielin.
Eight days they feast in joy together;
there are harpers and minstrels in plenty,
and robes of silk and delicate ermine,
and mules of Spain and well-groomed horses.

1880

lxii

Count William has married his lady;
now he remains thirty years in Orange,
and no day goes by without a challenge.

Reading 16

DANTE, THE DIVINE COMEDY

Introduction by Constance Bouchard

Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), usually known by his first name, is generally considered the greatest vernacular writer of the late Middle Ages. He was from the city of Florence, and his influence was such that the Florentine version of Italian in which he wrote became, and still is, the standard for written Italian. He was born into a noble family of Florence and became involved in the politics and internal quarrels of his hometown. The two major political parties there were the Guelfs and the Ghibellines, the former party further divided among subgroups that called themselves the White and the Black Guelfs. Dante was a prominent figure in the former, and when the Black Guelfs came to power in 1302, he was exiled from his beloved city.

It was during his exile from Florence that he began writing his masterpiece, the *Divine Comedy*. It is not a comedy in the sense of something knee-slappingly hilarious, but rather in the sense of a story in which good triumphs in the end. It was written as a very long poem, divided into short sections of a few pages each, called Cantos. Each Canto in turn is a series of three-line verses, which rhymed in the original Italian, although modern English translators prefer to avoid forcing the lines to rhyme, which can be much more awkward in English than in Italian. The “Comedy” overall is the story of a Pilgrim on a long journey which leads him, over the course of three books, first through Hell, then through Purgatory, and finally to Paradise. The following selection is from the beginning of the first volume, the “Inferno.”

The *Divine Comedy* is much more than the story of the human journey toward salvation. Rather, Dante used it as a vehicle to discuss philosophy, theology, politics—especially the relative authority of pope and emperor within the Holy Roman Empire—and history. Most of the people the narrator meets on the course of the journey are historical figures, who would have been well-known to the educated Italian audience for whom Dante was writing. Some were figures out of classical mythology, such as Odysseus (Ulysses). Others were people that Dante had known personally. Virtually all of them are given the opportunity in the poem to speak with the Pilgrim and explain how they ended up in their present position in the afterlife. Dante wrote in a very long tradition of visions of heaven and hell, even though his *Divine Comedy* is far longer and more complex than any of the earlier accounts of a visit to the afterlife.

A motif that he developed from these previous accounts was that the Pilgrim would need a guide to help direct him and explain what he was seeing. In the “Inferno,” the guide is Virgil, the classical Roman poet. Virgil, according to the poem, was chosen to be the Pilgrim’s guide by Beatrice, a long-dead lady whom Dante had admired from afar in his youth, and who herself

became the Pilgrim's guide when he reached Heaven in the third book (the name means "she who blesses"). Although Virgil, not having been a Christian, would have to remain in Hell according to Christian doctrine (or at least in Limbo, its outermost circle), Dante clearly admired him. It was also appropriate that as Dante set out to write his monumental poem he should have chosen for his first guide Virgil, best known for the *Aeneid*, a monumental poem on the founders of Rome.

The Hell that the Pilgrim and Virgil explore is divided into circles, where people are placed depending on the severity of their sin. The following selection involves only the outer circles, but as they descend into the center of hell, they see Lucifer, frozen on his throne, chewing on the three worst sinners of all, those who had betrayed those who trusted them most: Judas, who betrayed Christ, and Brutus and Cassius, who betrayed Caesar. The inclusion of Caesar's betrayers both indicates the continued relevance of Roman history in Dante's time and, especially, reflects his belief that Roman emperors, of which Caesar was regarded as the first, should have a crucial role in the governance of human society. Among the other people found in Hell were well-known sinners from throughout literature and history, as well as several of Dante's own enemies, and even some popes. Although the *Divine Comedy* is thus a deeply religious work, it thus did not hesitate to criticize where Dante felt criticism was needed, including the organized church.

THE PORTABLE DANTE

CANTO I

Halfway through his life, Dante the Pilgrim wakes to find himself lost in a dark wood. Terrified at being alone in so dismal a valley, he wanders until he comes to a hill bathed in sunlight, and his fear begins to leave him. But when he starts to climb the hill his path is blocked by three fierce beasts: first a Leopard, then a Lion, and finally a She-Wolf. They fill him with fear and drive him back down to the sunless wood. At that moment the figure of a man appears before him; it is the shade of Virgil, and the Pilgrim begs for help. Virgil tells him that he cannot overcome the beasts which obstruct his path; they must remain until a "Greyhound" comes who will drive them back to Hell. Rather by another path will the Pilgrim reach the sunlight, and Virgil promises to guide him on the path through Hell and Purgatory, after which another spirit, more fit than Virgil, will lead him to Paradise. The Pilgrim begs Virgil to lead on, and the Guide starts ahead. The Pilgrim follows.

Midway along the journey of our life

I woke to find myself in a dark wood,
for I had wandered off from the straight path. 3

How hard it is to tell what it was like,

this wood of wilderness, savage and stubborn
(the thought of it brings back all my old fears), 6

a bitter place! Death could scarce be bitterer.

But if I would show the good that came of it
I must talk about things other than the good. 9

1. The imaginary date of the poem's beginning is the night before Good Friday in 1300, the year of the papal jubilee proclaimed by Boniface VIII. Born in 1265, Dante would be thirty-five years old, which is half the seventy years allotted to man in the Bible.

The Portable Dante (ed. Mark Musa), Viking/Penguin, 1995 (ISBN 0253209307), original pp. 1–31 (first six cantos of *Divine Comedy*).

- How I entered there I cannot truly say,
 I had become so sleepy at the moment
 when I first strayed, leaving the path of truth; 12
- but when I found myself at the foot of a hill,
 at the edge of the wood's beginning, down in the valley,
 where I first felt my heart plunged deep in fear, 15
- I raised my head and saw the hilltop shawled
 in morning rays of light sent from the planet
 that leads men straight ahead on every road. 18
- And then only did terror start subsiding
 in my heart's lake, which rose to heights of fear
 that night I spent in deepest desperation. 21
- Just as a swimmer, still with panting breath,
 now safe upon the shore, out of the deep,
 might turn for one last look at the dangerous waters, 24
- so I, although my mind was turned to flee,
 turned round to gaze once more upon the pass
 that never let a living soul escape. 27
- I rested my tired body there awhile
 and then began to climb the barren slope
 (I dragged my stronger foot and limped along). 30
- Beyond the point the slope begins to rise
 sprang up a leopard, trim and very swift!
 It was covered by a pelt of many spots. 33
- And, everywhere I looked, the beast was there
 blocking my way, so time and time again
 I was about to turn and go back down. 36
- The hour was early in the morning then,
 the sun was climbing up with those same stars
 that had accompanied it on the world's first day, 39

31–51. The three beasts that block the Pilgrim's path could symbolize the three major divisions of Hell. The spotted Leopard (32) represents Fraud (cf. Canto XVI, 106–108) and reigns over the Eighth and Ninth Circles where the Fraudulent are punished (Cantos XVIII–XXXIV). The Lion (45) symbolizes all forms of Violence that are punished in the Seventh Circle (XII–XVII). The She-Wolf (49) represents the different types of Concupiscence or Incontinence that are punished in Circles Two to Five (V–VIII).

- the day Divine Love set their beauty turning;
 so the hour and sweet season of creation
 encouraged me to think I could get past 42
- that gaudy beast, wild in its spotted pelt,
 but then good hope gave way and fear returned
 when the figure of a lion loomed up before me, 45
- and he was coming straight toward me, it seemed,
 with head raised high, and furious with hunger—
 the air around him seemed to fear his presence. 48
- And now a she-wolf came, that in her leanness
 seemed racked with every kind of greediness
 (how many people she has brought to grief!). 51
- This last beast brought my spirit down so low
 with fear that seized me at the sight of her,
 I lost all hope of going up the hill. 54
- As a man who, rejoicing in his gains,
 suddenly seeing his gain turn into loss,
 will grieve as he compares his then and now, 57
- so she made me do, that relentless beast;
 coming toward me, slowly, step by step,
 she forced me back to where the sun is mute. 60
- While I was rushing down to that low place,
 my eyes made out a figure coming toward me
 of one grown faint, perhaps from too much silence. 63
- And when I saw him standing in this wasteland,
 “Have pity on my soul,” I cried to him,
 “whichever you are, shade or living man!” 66
- “No longer living man, though once I was,”
 he said, “and my parents were from Lombardy,
 both of them were Mantuans by birth. 69

62. The approaching figure represents (though not exclusively, for he has other meanings) Reason or Natural Philosophy. The Pilgrim cannot proceed to the light of Divine Love (the mountaintop) until he has overcome the three beasts of his sin; and because it is impossible for man to cope with the beasts unaided, Virgil has been summoned to guide the Pilgrim.

63. The voice of Reason has been silent in the Pilgrim's ear for a long time.

- I was born, though somewhat late, *sub Julio*,
and lived in Rome when good Augustus reigned,
when still the false and lying gods were worshipped. 72
- I was a poet and sang of that just man,
son of Anchises, who sailed off from Troy
after the burning of proud Ilium. 75
- But why retreat to so much misery?
Why not climb up this blissful mountain here,
the beginning and the source of all man's joy?" 78
- "Are you then Virgil, are you then that fount
from which pours forth so rich a stream of words?"
I said to him, bowing my head modestly. 81
- "O light and honor of the other poets,
may my long years of study, and that deep love
that made me search your verses, help me now! 84
- You are my teacher, the first of all my authors,
and you alone the one from whom I took
the noble style that was to bring me honor. 87
- You see the beast that forced me to retreat;
save me from her, I beg you, famous sage,
she makes me tremble, the blood throbs in my veins." 90
- "But you must journey down another road,"
he answered, when he saw me lost in tears,
"if ever you hope to leave this wilderness; 93
- this beast, the one you cry about in fear,
allows no soul to succeed along her path,
she blocks his way and puts an end to him. 96
- She is by nature so perverse and vicious,
her craving belly is never satisfied,
still hungering for food the more she eats. 99
- She mates with many creatures, and will go on
mating with more until the greyhound comes
and tracks her down to make her die in anguish. 102

91. Dante must choose another road because, in order to arrive at the Divine Light, it is necessary first to recognize the true nature of sin, renounce it, and pay penance for it.

- He will not feed on either land or money:
 his wisdom, love, and virtue shall sustain him;
 he will be born between Feltro and Feltro. 105
- He comes to save that fallen Italy
 for which the maid Camilla gave her life
 and Turnus, Nisus, Euryalus died of wounds. 108
- And he will hunt for her through every city
 until he drives her back to Hell once more,
 whence Envy first unleashed her on mankind. 111
- And so, I think it best you follow me
 for your own good, and I shall be your guide
 and lead you out through an eternal place 114
- where you will hear desperate cries, and see
 tormented shades, some old as Hell itself,
 and know what second death is, from their screams. 117
- And later you will see those who rejoice
 while they are burning, for they have hope of coming,
 whenever it may be, to join the blessed— 120
- to whom, if you too wish to make the climb,
 a spirit, worthier than I, must take you;
 I shall go back, leaving you in her care, 123
- because that Emperor dwelling on high
 will not let me lead any to His city,
 since I in life rebelled against His law. 126

101–111. The Greyhound has been identified with Henry VII, Charles Martel, and even Dante himself. It seems more plausible that the Greyhound represents Can Grande della Scala, the ruler of Verona from 1308 to 1329, whose “wisdom, love, and virtue” (104) were certainly well-known to Dante. Whoever the Greyhound may be, the prophecy would seem to indicate in a larger sense the establishment of a spiritual kingdom on earth in which “wisdom, love, and virtue” will replace the bestial sins of the world. Perhaps Dante had no specific person in mind.

107. Camilla was the valiant daughter of King Metabus, who was slain while fighting against the Trojans (*Aeneid* XI).

108. Turnus was the king of the Rutulians. Nisus and Euryalus were young Trojan warriors slain during a nocturnal raid on the camp of the Rutulians.

117. The “second” death is that of the soul, which occurs when the soul is damned.

122. Just as Virgil, the pagan Roman poet, cannot enter the Christian Paradise because he lived before the birth of Christ and lacks knowledge of Christian salvation, so Reason can only guide the Pilgrim to a certain point: In order to enter Paradise, the Pilgrim’s guide must be Christian Grace or Revelation (Theology) in the figure of Beatrice.

124. Note the pagan terminology of Virgil’s reference to God: It expresses, as best it can, his unenlightened conception of the Supreme Authority.

Everywhere He reigns, and there He rules;
 there is His city, there is His high throne.
 Oh, happy the one He makes His citizen!" 129

And I to him: "Poet, I beg of you,
 in the name of God, that God you never knew,
 save me from this evil place and worse, 132

lead me there to the place you spoke about
 that I may see the gate Saint Peter guards
 and those whose anguish you have told me of." 135

Then he moved on, and I moved close behind him.

CANTO II

But the Pilgrim begins to waver; he expresses to Virgil his misgivings about his ability to undertake the journey proposed by Virgil. His predecessors have been Aeneas and Saint Paul, and he feels unworthy to take his place in their company. But Virgil rebukes his cowardice, and relates the chain of events that led him to come to Dante. The Virgin Mary took pity on the Pilgrim in his despair and instructed Saint Lucia to aid him. The Saint turned to Beatrice because of Dante's great love for her, and Beatrice in turn went down to Hell, into Limbo, and asked Virgil to guide her friend until that time when she herself would become his guide. The Pilgrim takes heart at Virgil's explanation and agrees to follow him.

The day was fading and the darkening air
 was releasing all the creatures on our earth
 from their daily tasks, and I, one man alone, 3

was making ready to endure the battle
 of the journey, and of the pity it involved,
 which my memory, unerring, shall now retrace. 6

O Muses! O high genius! Help me now!
 O memory that wrote down what I saw,
 here your true excellence shall be revealed! 9

Then I began: "O poet come to guide me,
 tell me if you think my worth sufficient
 before you trust me to this arduous road. 12

You wrote about young Sylvius's father,
 who went beyond, with flesh corruptible,
 with all his senses, to the immortal realm; 15

- but if the Adversary of all evil
 was kind to him, considering who he was,
 and the consequence that was to come from him, 18
- this cannot seem, to thoughtful men, unfitting,
 for in the highest heaven he was chosen
 father of glorious Rome and of her empire, 21
- and both the city and her lands, in truth,
 were established as the place of holiness
 where the successors of great Peter sit. 24
- And from this journey you celebrate in verse,
 Aeneas learned those things that were to bring
 victory for him, and for Rome, the Papal seat; 27
- then later the Chosen Vessel, Paul, ascended
 to ring back confirmation of that faith
 which is the first step on salvation's road. 30
- But why am I to go? Who allows me to?
I am not Aeneas, I am not Paul,
 neither I nor any man would think me worthy; 33
- and so, if I should undertake the journey,
I fear it might turn out an act of folly—
you are wise, you see more than my words express." 36
- As one who unwill's what he willed, will change
 his purpose with some new second thought,
 completely quitting what he first had started, 39
- so I did, standing there on that dark slope,
 thinking, ending the beginning of that venture
 I was so quick to take up at the start. 42
- "If I have truly understood your words,"
 that shade of magnanimity replied,
 "your soul is burdened with that cowardice 45
- which often weighs so heavily on man,
 it turns him from a noble enterprise
 like a frightened beast that shies at its own shadow. 48

28–30. In his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (12:2–4), the apostle Paul alludes to his mystical elevation to the third heaven and to the arcane messages pronounced there.

- To free you from this fear, let me explain
the reason I came here, the words I heard
that first time I felt pity for your soul: 51
- I was among those dead who are suspended,
when a lady summoned me. She was so blessed
and beautiful, I implored her to command me. 54
- With eyes of light more bright than any star,
in low, soft tones she started to address me
in her own language, with an angel's voice: 57
- 'O noble soul, courteous Mantuan,
whose fame the world continues to preserve
and will preserve as long as world there is, 60
- my friend, who is no friend of Fortune's, strays
on a desert slope; so many obstacles
have crossed his path, his fright has turned him back 63
- I fear he may have gone so far astray,
from what report has come to me in Heaven,
that I may have started to his aid too late. 66
- Now go, and with your elegance of speech,
with whatever may be needed for his freedom,
give him your help, and thereby bring me solace. 69
- I am Beatrice, who urges you to go;
I come from the place I am longing to return to;
love moved me, as it moves me now to speak. 72
- When I return to stand before my Lord,
often I shall sing your praises to Him.'
And then she spoke no more. And I began, 75
- 'O Lady of Grace, through whom alone mankind
may go beyond all worldly things contained
within the sphere that makes the smallest round, 78
- your plea fills me with happy eagerness—
to have obeyed already would still seem late!
You needed only to express your wish. 81
- But tell me how you dared to make this journey
all the way down to this point of spacelessness,
away from your spacious home that calls you back.' 84

- 'Because your question searches for deep meaning,
I shall explain in simple words,' she said,
'just why I have no fear of coming here. 87
- A man must stand in fear of just those things
that truly have the power to do us harm,
of nothing else, for nothing else is fearsome. 90
- God gave me such a nature through His Grace,
the torments you must bear cannot affect me,
nor are the fires of Hell a threat to me. 93
- A gracious lady sits in Heaven grieving
for what happened to the one I send you to,
and her compassion breaks Heaven's stern decree. 96
- She called Lucia and making her request,
she said, "Your faithful one is now in need
of you, and to you I now commend his soul." 99
- Lucia, the enemy of cruelty,
hastened to make her way to where I was,
sitting by the side of ancient Rachel, 102
- and said to me: "Beatrice, God's true praise,
will you not help the one whose love was such
it made him leave the vulgar crowd for you? 105
- Do you not hear the pity of his weeping,
do you not see what death it is that threatens him
along that river the sea shall never conquer?" 108
- There never was a wordly person living
more anxious to promote his selfish gains
than I was at the sound of words like these— 111
- to leave my holy seat and come down here
and place my trust in you, in your noble speech
that honors you and all those who have heard it!' 114
- When she had finished reasoning, she turned
her shining eyes away, and there were tears.
How eager then I was to come to you! 117

94. The lady is the Virgin Mary.

102. In the Dantean Paradise Rachel is seated by Beatrice.

And I have come to you just as she wished,
 and I have freed you from the beast that stood
 blocking the quick way up the mount of bliss. 120

So what is wrong? Why, why do you delay?
 Why are you such a coward in your heart,
 why aren't you bold and free of all your fear, 123

when three such gracious ladies, who are blessed,
 watch out for you up there in Heaven's court,
 and my words, too, bring promise of such good?" 126

As little flowers from the frosty night
 are closed and limp, and when the sun shines down
 on them, they rise to open on their stem, 129

my wilted strength began to bloom within me,
 and such warm courage flowed into my heart
 that I spoke like a man set free of fear. 132

"O she, compassionate, who moved to help me!
 And you, all kindness, in obeying quick
 those words of truth she brought with her for you— 135

you and the words you spoke have moved my heart
 with such desire to continue onward
 that now I have returned to my first purpose. 138

Let us start, for both our wills, joined now, are one.
 You are my guide, you are my lord and teacher."
 These were my words to him and, when he moved, 141

I entered on that deep and rugged road.

CANTO III

As the two poets enter the vestibule that leads to Hell itself, Dante sees the inscription above the gate, and he hears the screams of anguish from the damned souls. Rejected by God and not accepted by the powers of Hell, the first group of souls are "nowhere," because of their cowardly refusal to make a choice in life. Their punishment is to follow a banner at a furious pace forever, and to be tormented by flies and hornets. The Pilgrim recognizes several of these shades but mentions none by name. Next they come to the River Acheron, where they are greeted by the infernal boatman, Charon. Among those doomed souls who are to be ferried across the river, Charon sees the living man and challenges him, but Virgil lets it be known that his companion must pass. Then across the landscape rushes a howling wind, which blasts the Pilgrim out of his senses, and he falls to the ground.

I AM THE WAY INTO THE DOLEFUL CITY,
 I AM THE WAY INTO ETERNAL GRIEF,
 I AM THE WAY TO A FORSAKEN RACE. 3

JUSTICE IT WAS THAT MOVED MY GREAT CREATOR;
 DIVINE OMNIPOTENCE CREATED ME,
 AND HIGHEST WISDOM JOINED WITH PRIMAL LOVE. 6

BEFORE ME NOTHING BUT ETERNAL THINGS
 WERE MADE, AND I SHALL LAST ETERNALLY.
 ABANDON EVERY HOPE, ALL YOU WHO ENTER. 9

I saw these words spelled out in somber colors
 inscribed along the ledge above a gate;
 “Master,” I said, “these words I see are cruel.” 12

He answered me, speaking with experience:
 “Now here you must leave all distrust behind;
 let all your cowardice die on this spot. 15

We are at the place where earlier I said
 you could expect to see the suffering race
 of souls who lost the good of intellect.” 18

Placing his hand on mine, smiling at me
 in such a way that I was reassured,
 he led me in, into those mysteries. 21

Here sighs and cries and shrieks of lamentation
 echoed throughout the starless air of Hell;
 at first these sounds resounding made me weep: 24

tongues confused, a language strained in anguish
 with cadences of anger, shrill outcries
 and raucous groans that joined with sounds of hands, 27

raising a whirling storm that turns itself
 forever through that air of endless black,
 like grains of sand swirling when a whirlwind blows. 30

And I, in the midst of all this circling horror,
 began, “Teacher, what are these sounds I hear?
 What souls are these so overwhelmed by grief?” 33

5–6. Divine Omnipotence, Highest Wisdom, and Primal Love are, respectively, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Thus, the gate of Hell was created by the Trinity moved by Justice.

18. Souls who have lost sight of God.

- And he to me: "This wretched state of being
is the fate of those sad souls who lived a life
but lived it with no blame and with no praise. 36
- They are mixed with that repulsive choir of angels
neither faithful nor unfaithful to their God,
who undecided stood but for themselves. 39
- Heaven, to keep its beauty, cast them out,
but even Hell itself would not receive them,
for fear the damned might glory over them." 42
- And I. "Master, what torments do they suffer
that force them to lament so bitterly?"
He answered: "I will tell you in few words: 45
- these wretches have no hope of truly dying,
and this blind life they lead is so abject
it makes them envy every other fate. 48
- The world will not record their having been there;
Heaven's mercy and its justice turn from them.
Let's not discuss them; look and pass them by." 51
- And so I looked and saw a kind of banner
rushing ahead, whirling with aimless speed
as though it would not ever take a stand; 54
- behind it an interminable train
of souls pressed on, so many that I wondered
how death could have undone so great a number. 57
- When I had recognized a few of them,
I saw the shade of the one who must have been
the coward who had made the great refusal. 60
- At once I understood, and I was sure
this was the sect of evil souls who were
hateful to God and His enemies. 63

52–69. In the *Inferno* divine retribution assumes the form of the *contrapasso*, i.e., the just punishment of sin, effected by a process either resembling or contrasting to the sin itself. In this canto the *contrapasso* opposes the sin of neutrality, or inactivity: The souls who in their early lives had no banner, no leader to follow, now run forever after one.

60. The coward could be Pontius Pilate, who refused to pass sentence on Christ.

These wretches, who had never truly lived,
went naked, and were stung and stung again
by the hornets and the wasps that circled them 66

and made their faces run with blood in streaks;
their blood, mixed with their tears, dripped to their feet,
and disgusting maggots collected in the pus. 69

And when I looked beyond this crowd I saw
a throng upon the shore of a wide river,
which made me ask, "Master, I would like to know: 72

who are these people, and what law is this
that makes those souls so eager for the crossing—
as I can see, even in this dim light?" 75

And he: "All this will be made plain to you
as soon as we shall come to stop awhile
upon the sorrowful shore of Acheron." 78

And I, with eyes cast down in shame, for fear
that I perhaps had spoken out of turn,
said nothing more until we reached the river. 81

And suddenly, coming toward us in a boat,
a man of years whose ancient hair was white
shouted at us, "Woe to you, perverted souls! 84

Give up all hope of ever seeing Heaven:
I come to lead you to the other shore,
into eternal darkness, ice, and fire. 87

And you, the living soul, you over there,
get away from all these people who are dead."
But when he saw I did not move aside, 90

he said, "Another way, by other ports,
not here, shall you pass to reach the other shore;
a lighter skiff than this must carry you." 93

And my guide, "Charon, this is no time for anger!
It is so willed, there where the power is
for what is willed; that's all you need to know." 96

These words brought silence to the woolly cheeks
of the ancient steersman of the livid marsh,
whose eyes were set in glowing wheels of fire. 99

- But all those souls there, naked, in despair,
 changed color and their teeth began to chatter
 at the sound of his announcement of their doom. 102
- They were cursing God, cursing their own parents,
 the human race, the time, the place, the seed
 of their beginning, and their day of birth. 105
- Then all together, weeping bitterly,
 they packed themselves along the wicked shore
 that waits for every man who fears not God. 108
- The devil, Charon, with eyes of glowing coals,
 summons them all together with a signal,
 and with an oar he strikes the laggard sinner. 111
- As in autumn when the leaves begin to fall,
 one after the other (until the branch
 is witness to the spoils spread on the ground), 114
- so did the evil seed of Adam's Fall
 drop from that shore to the boat, one at a time,
 at the signal, like the falcon to its lure. 117
- Away they go across the darkened waters,
 and before they reach the other side to land,
 a new throng starts collecting on this side. 120
- "My son," the gentle master said to me,
 "all those who perish in the wrath of God
 assemble here from all parts of the earth; 123
- they want to cross the river, they are eager;
 it is Divine Justice that spurs them on,
 turning the fear they have into desire. 126
- A good soul never comes to make this crossing,
 so, if Charon grumbles at the sight of you,
 you see now what his words are really saying." 129
- He finished speaking, and the grim terrain
 shook violently; and the fright it gave me
 even now in recollection makes me sweat. 132

124–126. It is perhaps a part of the punishment that the souls of all the damned are eager for their punishment to begin; those who were so willing to sin on earth, are in hell damned with a willingness to receive their just retribution.

Out of the tear-drench land a wind arose
 which blasted forth into a reddish light,
 knocking my senses out of me completely, 135
 and I fell as one falls tired into sleep.

CANTO IV

Waking from his swoon, the Pilgrim is led by Virgil to the First Circle of Hell, known as Limbo, where the sad shades of the virtuous non-Christians dwell. The souls here, including Virgil, suffer no physical torment, but they must live, in desire, without hope of seeing God. Virgil tells about Christ's descent into Hell and His salvation of several Old Testament figures. The poets see a light glowing in the darkness, and as they proceed toward it, they are met by the four greatest (other than Virgil) pagan poets: Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan, who take the Pilgrim into their group. As they come closer to the light, the Pilgrim perceives a splendid castle, where the greatest non-Christian thinkers dwell together with other famous historical figures. Once within the castle, the Pilgrim sees, among others, Electra, Aeneas, Caesar, Saladin, Aristotle, Plato, Orpheus, Cicero, Avicenna, and Averroës. But soon they must leave; and the poets move from the radiance of the castle toward the fearful encompassing darkness.

A heavy clap of thunder! I awoke
 from the deep sleep that drugged my mind—startled,
 the way one is when shaken out of sleep. 3

I turned my rested eyes from side to side,
 already on my feet and, staring hard,
 I tried my best to find out where I was, 6

and this is what I saw: I found myself
 upon the brink of grief's abysmal valley
 that collects the thunderings of endless cries. 9

So dark and deep and nebulous it was,
 try as I might to force my sight below,
 I could not see the shape of anything. 12

"Let us descend into the sightless world,"
 began the poet (his face was deathly pale):
 "I will go first, and you will follow me." 15

And I, aware of his changed color, said:
 "But how can I go on if you are frightened?
 You are my constant strength when I lose heart." 18

And he to me: "The anguish of the souls
 that are down here paints my face with pity—
 which you have wrongly taken to be fear. 21

Let us go, the long road urges us.”

He entered then, leading the way for me
down to the first circle of the abyss.

24

Down there, to judge only by what I heard,
there were no wails but just the sounds of sighs
rising and trembling through the timeless air,

27

the sounds of sighs of untormented grief
burdening these groups, diverse and teeming,
made up of men and women and of infants.

30

Then the good master said, “You do not ask
what sort of souls are these you see around you.
Now you should know before we go on farther,

33

they have not sinned. But their great worth alone
was not enough, for they did not know Baptism,
which is the gateway to the faith you follow,

36

and if they came before the birth of Christ,
they did not worship God the way one should;
I myself am a member of this group.

39

For this defect, and for no other guilt,
we here are lost. In this alone we suffer:
cut off from hope, we live on in desire.”

42

The words I heard weighed heavy on my heart;
to think that souls as virtuous as these
were suspended in that limbo, and forever!

45

“Tell me, my teacher, tell me, O my master,”
I began (wishing to have confirmed by him
the teachings of unerring Christian doctrine),

48

“did any leave here, through his merit
or with another’s help, and go to bliss?”
And he, who understood my hidden question,

51

answered: “I was a novice in this place
when I saw a mighty lord descend to us
who wore the sign of victory as his crown.

54

He took from us the shade of our first parent,
of Abel, his good son, of Noah, too,
and of obedient Moses, who made the laws;

57

- Abram, the Patriarch, David the King,
 Israel with his father and his children,
 with Rachel, whom he worked so hard to win; 60
- and many more he chose for blessedness;
 and you should know, before these souls were taken,
 no human soul had ever reached salvation." 63
- We did not stop our journey while he spoke,
 but continued on our way along the woods—
 I say the woods, for souls were thick as trees. 66
- We had not gone too far from where I woke
 when I made out a fire up ahead,
 a hemisphere of light that lit the dark. 69
- We were still at some distance from that place,
 but close enough for me vaguely to see
 that honorable souls possessed that spot. 72
- "O glory of the sciences and arts,
 who are these souls enjoying special honor,
 dwelling apart from all the others here?" 75
- And he to me: "The honored name they bear
 that still resounds above in your own world
 wins Heaven's favor for them in this place." 78
- And as he spoke I heard a voice announce:
 "Now let us honor our illustrious poet,
 his shade that left is now returned to us." 81
- And when the voice was silent and all was quiet
 I saw four mighty shades approaching us,
 their faces showing neither joy or sorrow. 84
- Then my good master started to explain:
 "Observe the one who comes with sword in hand,
 leading the three as if he were their master. 87
- It is the shade of Homer, sovereign poet,
 and coming second, Horace, the satirist;
 Ovid is the third, and last comes Lucan. 90

69. The "hemisphere of light" emanates from a "splendid castle" (106), the dwelling place of the virtuous men of wisdom in Limbo. The light is the illumination of human intellect, which those who dwell in the castle had in such high measure on earth.

86–88. Because his name was inseparably linked with the Trojan War, Homer is portrayed by Dante as a sword-bearing poet, one who sang of arms and martial heroes.

- Since they all share one name with me, the name
 you heard resounding in that single voice,
 they honor me and do well doing so." 93
- So I saw gathered there the noble school
 of the master singer of sublimest verse,
 who soars above all others like the eagle. 96
- And after they had talked awhile together,
 they turned and with a gesture welcomed me,
 and at that sign I saw my master smile. 99
- Greater honor still they deigned to grant me:
 they welcomed me as one of their own group,
 so that I numbered sixth among such minds. 102
- We walked together toward the shining light,
 discussing things that here are best kept silent,
 as there they were most fitting for discussion. 105
- We reached the boundaries of a splendid castle
 that seven times was circled by high walls
 defended by a sweetly flowing stream. 108
- We walked right over it as on hard ground;
 through seven gates I passed with those wise spirits,
 and then we reached a meadow fresh in bloom. 111
- There people were whose eyes were calm and grave,
 whose bearing told of great authority;
 seldom they spoke and always quietly. 114
- Then moving to one side we reached a place
 spread out and luminous, higher than before,
 allowing us to view all who were there. 117

106–111. The allegorical construction of the castle is open to question. It may represent natural philosophy unilluminated by divine wisdom, in which case the seven walls serving to protect the castle would be the seven moral and speculative virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, intellect, science, and knowledge); and the seven gates that provide access to the castle would be the seven liberal arts that formed the medieval school curriculum (music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy—the *quadrivium*; and grammar, logic, and rhetoric—the *trivium*). The symbolic value of the stream also remains uncertain; it could signify eloquence, a “stream” that the eloquent Virgil and Dante should have no trouble crossing—and indeed, they “walked right over it as on hard ground” (109).

112–144. The inhabitants of the great castle are important pagan philosophers and poets as well as famous writers. Three of the shades named (Saladin, Avicenna, Averroës) lived only one hundred or two hundred years before Dante. Modern readers might wonder at the inclusion of medieval non-Christians among the virtuous pagans of antiquity, but the three just mentioned were among the non-Christians respected, particularly during the Middle Ages.

And right before us on the lustrous green
 the mighty shades were pointed out to me
 (my heart felt glory when I looked at them). 120

There was Electra standing with a group,
 among whom I saw Hector and Aeneas,
 and Caesar, falcon-eyed and fully armed. 123

I saw Camilla and Penthesilea;
 across the way I saw the Latian King,
 with Lavinia, his daughter, by his side. 126

I saw the Brutus who drove out the Tarquin;
 Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, and Cornelia;
 off, by himself, I noticed Saladin, 129

and when I raised my eyes a little higher
 I saw the master sage of those who know,
 sitting with his philosophic family. 132

All gaze at him, all pay their homage to him;
 and there I saw both Socrates and Plato,
 each closer to his side than any other; 135

Democritus, who said the world was chance,
 Diogenes, Thales, Anaxagoras,
 Empedocles, Zeno, and Heraclitus; 138

121. Electra was the daughter of Atlas, the mother of Dardanus, and the founder of Troy; thus, her followers include all members of the Trojan race. She should not be confused with Electra, daughter of Agamemnon, the character in plays by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

122. Among Electra's descendants are Hector, the eldest son of Priam, king of Troy, and Aeneas (cf. Canto I, 73–75; and Canto II, 13–24).

123. Julius Caesar proclaimed himself the first emperor of Rome after defeating numerous opponents in civil conflicts.

124–126. For Camilla see Canto I, note on line 107. Penthesilea was the glamorous queen of the Amazons who aided the Trojans against the Greeks and was slain by Achilles during the conflict. King Latinus commanded the central region of the Italian peninsula, the site where Aeneas founded Rome. He gave Lavinia to the Trojan conqueror in marriage.

127–129. Outraged by the murder of his brother and the rape (and subsequent suicide) of his sister (Lucretia), Lucius Brutus incited the Roman populace to expel the Tarquins, the perpetrators of the offenses. This accomplished, he was elected first consul and consequently became the founder of the Roman Republic. The four women were famous Roman wives and mothers. Lucretia was the wife of Collatinus; Julia the daughter of Julius Caesar and wife of Pompey; Marcia the second wife of Cato of Utica (in the *Convivio* Dante makes her the symbol of the noble soul); and Cornelia the daughter of Scipio Africanus Major and mother of the Gracchi, the tribunes Tiberius and Caius. A distinguished soldier, Saladin became sultan of Egypt in 1174. Medieval opinion of Saladin was favorable; he was lauded for his generosity and his magnanimity.

131. To Dante, Aristotle represented the summit of human reason, that point which man could reach on his own without the benefit of Christian revelation.

- I saw the one who classified our herbs:
 Dioscorides I mean. And I saw Orpheus,
 Tully, Linus, Seneca the moralist, 141
- Euclid the geometer, and Ptolemy,
 Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna,
 and Averroës, who made the Commentary. 144
- I cannot tell about them all in full;
 my theme is long and urges me ahead,
 often I must omit things I have seen. 147
- The company of six becomes just two;
 my wise guide leads me by another way
 out of the quiet into tempestuous air. 150
- I come into a place where no light is.

CANTO V

From Limbo Virgil leads his ward down to the threshold of the Second Circle of Hell, where for the first time he will see the damned in Hell being punished for their sins. There, barring their way, is the hideous figure of Minòs, the bestial judge of Dante's underworld; but after strong words from Virgil, the poets are allowed to pass into the dark space of this circle, where can be heard the wailing voices of the Lustful, whose punishment consists in being forever whirled

137. Diogenes was the Cynic philosopher who believed that the only good lies in virtue secured through self-control and abstinence. Anaxagoras was a Greek philosopher of the Ionian school (500–428 B.C.). Among his famous students were Pericles and Euripides. Thales (ca. 635–ca. 545 B.C.), an early Greek philosopher born at Miletus, founded the Ionian school of philosophy and in his main doctrine maintained that water is the elemental principle of all things.

140. Dioscorides was a Greek natural scientist and physician of the first century A.D. Orpheus was a mythical Greek poet and musician whose lyrical talent was such that it moved rocks and trees and tamed wild beasts.

141. Tully was Marcus Tullius Cicero, celebrated Roman orator, writer, and philosopher (106–43 B.C.). Linus was a mythical Greek poet and musician who is credited with inventing the dirge. Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.–A.D. 65) followed the philosophy of the Stoics in his oral treatises. Dante calls him “the moralist” to distinguish him from Seneca the tragedian, who was thought (erroneously) during the Middle Ages to be another person.

142. Euclid was a Greek mathematician (ca. 300 B.C.) who wrote a treatise on geometry that was the first codification and exposition of mathematical principles. Ptolemy was a Greek mathematician, astronomer, and geographer. The universe, according to the Ptolemaic system (which was accepted by the Middle Ages), so named although he did not invent it, had the earth as its fixed center encircled by nine spheres.

143. Hippocrates was a Greek physician (ca. 460–377 B.C.) who founded the medical profession and introduced the scientific art of healing. Galen was a celebrated physician (ca. A.D. 130–ca. 200) who practiced his art in Greece, Egypt, and Rome. Avicenna (or Ibn-Sina) was an Arabian philosopher and physician (A.D. 980–1037) who was a prolific writer.

144. Ibn-Rushd, called Averroës (ca. A.D. 1126–ca. 1198), was a celebrated Arabian scholar born in Spain. He was widely known in the Middle Ages for his commentary on Aristotle, which served as the basis for the work of St. Thomas Aquinas.

about in a dark, stormy wind. After seeing a thousand or more famous lovers—including Semiramis, Dido, Helen, Achilles, and Paris—the Pilgrim asks to speak to two figures he sees together. They are Francesca da Rimini and her lover, Paolo, and the scene in which they appear is probably the most famous episode of the Inferno. At the end of the scene, the Pilgrim, who has been overcome by pity for the lovers, faints to the ground.

This way I went, descending from the first
into the second round, that holds less space
but much more pain—stinging the soul to wailing. 3

There stands Minòs grotesquely, and he snarls,
examining the guilty at the entrance;
he judges and dispatches, tail in coils. 6

By this I mean that when the evil soul
appears before him, it confesses all,
and he, who is the expert judge of sins, 9

knows to what place in Hell the soul belongs;
the times he wraps his tail around himself
tell just how far the sinner must go down. 12

The damned keep crowding up in front of him:
they pass along to judgment one by one;
they speak, they hear, and then are hurled below. 15

“O you who come to the place where pain is host,”
Minòs spoke out when he caught sight of me,
putting aside the duties of his office, 18

“be careful how you enter and whom you trust
it’s easy to get in, but don’t be fooled!”
And my guide said to him: “Why keep on shouting? 21

Do not attempt to stop his fated journey;
it is so willed there where the power is
for what is willed; that’s all you need to know.” 24

And now the notes of anguish start to play
upon my ears; and now I find myself
where sounds on sounds of weeping pound at me. 27

4. Minòs was the son of Zeus and Europa. As king of Crete he was revered for his wisdom and judicial gifts. For these qualities he became chief magistrate of the underworld in classical literature. (See Virgil, *Aeneid* VI, 432–433.) Although Dante did not alter Minòs’ official function, he transformed him into a demonic figure, both in his physical characteristics and in his bestial activity.

I came to a place where no light shone at all,
 bellowing like the sea racked by a tempest,
 when warring winds attack it from both sides. 30

The infernal storm, eternal in its rage,
 sweeps and drives the spirits with its blast:
 it whirls them, lashing them with punishment. 33

When they are swept back past their place of judgment,
 then come the shrieks, laments, and anguished cries;
 there they blaspheme God's almighty power. 36

I learned that to this place of punishment
 all those who sin in lust have been condemned,
 those who make reason slave to appetite; 39

and as the wings of starlings in the winter
 bear them along in wide-spread, crowded flocks,
 so does that wind propel the evil spirits: 42

now here, then there, and up and down, it drives them
 with never any hope to comfort them—
 hope not of rest but even of suffering less. 45

And just like cranes in flight, chanting their lays,
 stretching an endless line in their formation,
 I saw approaching, crying their laments, 48

spirits carried along by the battling winds.
 And so I asked, "Teacher, tell me, what souls
 are these punished in the sweep of the black wind?" 51

"The first of those whose story you should know,"
 my master wasted no time answering,
 "was empress over lands of many tongues; 54

her vicious tastes had so corrupted her
 she licensed every form of lust with laws
 to cleanse the stain of scandal she had spread; 57

she is Semiramis, who, legend says,
 was Ninus' wife as well as his successor;
 she governed all the land the Sultan rules. 60

31–32. The *contrapasso* or punishment suggests that lust (the "infernal storm") is pursued without the light of reason (in the darkness).

The next is she who killed herself for love
 and broke faith with the ashes of Sichaeus;
 and there is Cleopatra, who loved men's lusting. 63

See Helen there, the root of evil woe
 lasting long years, and see the great Achilles,
 who lost his life to love, in final combat; 66

see Paris, Tristan"—then, more than a thousand
 he pointed out to me, and named them all,
 those shades whom love cut off from life on earth. 69

After I heard my teacher call the names
 of all these knights and ladies of ancient times,
 pity confused my senses, and I was dazed. 72

I began: "Poet, I would like, with all my heart,
 to speak to those two there who move together
 and seem to be so light upon the winds." 75

And he: "You'll see when they are closer to us;
 if you entreat them by that love of theirs
 that carries them along, they'll come to you." 78

When the winds bent their course in our direction
 I raised my voice to them, "O wearied souls,
 come speak with us if it be not forbidden." 81

As doves, called by desire to return
 to their sweet nest, with wings raised high and poised,
 float downward through the air, guided by will, 84

64. Helen of Troy.

65–66. Enticed by the beauty of Polyxena, a daughter of the Trojan king, Achilles desired her to be his wife, but Hecuba, Polyxena's mother, arranged a counterplot with Paris so that when Achilles entered the temple for his presumed marriage, he was treacherously slain by Paris.

67. Paris was the son of Priam, king of Troy, whose abduction of Helen ignited the Trojan War. Tristan was the central figure of numerous medieval French, German, and Italian romances. Sent as a messenger by his uncle, King Mark of Cornwall, to obtain Isolt for him in marriage, Tristan became enamored of her, and she of him. After Isolt's marriage to Mark, the lovers continued their love affair, and in order to maintain its secrecy they necessarily employed many deceits and ruses. According to one version, Mark, increasingly suspicious of their attachment, finally discovered them together and ended the incestuous relationship by mortally wounding Tristan with a lance.

74. The two are Francesca, daughter of Guido Vecchio da Polenta, lord of Ravenna; and Paolo Malatesta, third son of Malatesta da Verrucchio, lord of Rimini. Around 1275 the aristocratic Francesca was married for political reasons to Gianciotto, the physically deformed second son of Malatesta da Verrucchio. In time a love affair developed between Francesca and Gianciotto's youngest brother, Paolo. One day the betrayed husband discovered them in an amorous embrace and slew them both.

- so these two left the flock where Dido is
and came toward us through the malignant air,
such was the tender power of my call. 87
- “O living creature, gracious and so kind,
who makes your way here through this dingy air
to visit us who stained the world with blood, 90
- if we could claim as friend the King of Kings,
we would beseech him that he grant you peace,
you who show pity for our atrocious plight. 93
- Whatever pleases you to hear or speak
we will hear and we will speak about with you
as long as the wind, here where we are, is silent. 96
- The place where I was born lies on the shore
where the river Po with its attendant streams
descends to seek its final resting place. 99
- Love, quick to kindle in the gentle heart,
seized this one for the beauty of my body,
torn from me. (How it happened still offends me!) 102
- Love, that excuses no one loved from loving,
seized me so strongly with delight in him
that, as you see, he never leaves my side. 105
- Love led us straight to sudden death together.
Caïna awaits the one who quenched our lives.”
These were the words that came from them to us. 108
- When those offended souls had told their story,
I bowed my head and kept it bowed until
the poet said, “What are you thinking of?” 111
- When finally I spoke, I sighed, “Alas,
all those sweet thoughts, and oh, how much desiring
brought these two down into this agony.” 114
- And then I turned to them and tried to speak;
I said, “Francesca, the torment that you suffer
brings painful tears of pity to my eyes. 117

107. Caïna was one of the four divisions of Cocytus, the lower part of Hell, wherein those souls who treacherously betrayed their kin are tormented.

But tell me, in that time of your sweet sighing
how, and by what signs, did love allow you
to recognize your dubious desires?" 120

And she to me: "There is no greater pain
than to remember, in our present grief,
past happiness (as well your teacher knows)! 123

But if your great desire is to learn
the very root of such a love as ours,
I shall tell you, but in words of flowing tears. 126

One day we read, to pass the time away,
of Lancelot, of how he fell in love;
we were alone, innocent of suspicion. 129

Time and again our eyes were brought together
by the book we read; our faces flushed and paled.
To the moment of one line alone we yielded: 132

it was when we read about those longed-for lips
now being kissed by such a famous lover,
that this one (who shall never leave my side) 135

then kissed my mouth, and trembled as he did.
Our Galehot was that book and he who wrote it.
That day we read no further." And all the while 138

the one of the two spirits spoke these words,
the other wept, in such a way that pity
blurred my senses; I swooned as though to die, 141

and fell to Hell's floor as a body, dead, falls.

Reading 17

PETRARCH, LETTER TO POSTERITY

Introduction by Michael Levin

Francesco Petrarch (1304–74) is often referred to as “the father of the Italian Renaissance.” Born into an exiled Florentine family, Petrarch spent most of his life wandering about Italy, much like Dante. As a young man he attended law school, but he hated it. At one point he took holy orders, but that did not take either—much to his own disgust, Petrarch could never completely renounce the pleasures of the world. His only true loves were classical literature and a woman named Laura, and both would contribute to his profound effect on the Italian Renaissance.

Petrarch felt much more at ease with the history and literature of classical Rome than with the events and people of his own time. He often bemoaned the ignorance and vulgarity of his contemporaries, and longed for a return to the spirit of the classical age. This desire to revive classical ideas and ideals is of course at the heart of the Renaissance (which means “rebirth”), and Petrarch was the first of the Renaissance humanists who sought to rejuvenate their society. It was Petrarch who first coined the term “Dark Ages,” referring to the centuries separating classical Rome from himself, and we still owe the idea of the “Middle Ages” to Petrarch and the Renaissance writers who followed his example. In order to return to the virtues of classical Rome, Petrarch advocated the use of the Latin language as the Romans knew it, particularly the great orator and writer Cicero. Petrarch spent his whole life trying to perfect a “Ciceronian” Latin prose style, which subsequently became the model of eloquence for generations of scholars.

But Petrarch isn’t important only for his Latin works; his poetry in vernacular Italian was equally influential. Like Dante, Petrarch wrote a great deal of love poetry dedicated to a perfect, unattainable woman. Petrarch’s love object was a blonde beauty named Laura, who may or may not have been aware of Petrarch’s existence. He wrote a collection of 366 poems about Laura, called the *Canzoniere* (“Songbook”). These poems served as models for love poetry for at least three centuries—Shakespeare’s sonnets often echo Petrarch. To the end of his life Petrarch wrestled with his conflicted emotions about earthly love. On the other hand, Laura served as Petrarch’s muse, inspiring him to write great poetry. On the other hand Petrarch genuinely yearned to live a pure Christian life, and reject the ephemeral glories of this world. Petrarch expressed this conflict in a work called *Secretum*, in which he imagined a dialogue between himself and St. Augustine, one of the biggest influences on Petrarch’s intellectual life. The character

of St. Augustine berates Petrarch for caring too much about earthly love and fame, but Petrarch never really changes his mind.

For Petrarch did care about being famous. He promoted the idea of reviving the ancient Roman tradition of granting the title of poet laureate, so that he could win it. And he also wrote the letter we present here, the “Letter to Posterity.” Petrarch wrote many letters, to contemporaries and to his long-dead heroes like Cicero. But this letter is written to us, his future readers. Petrarch is often called a “modern” author because of his self-awareness, his individualism, and his desire for immortality through his art. All of these things are evident in this letter. Read this letter and you will hear the voice of a man who has been dead for over six centuries. Petrarch would no doubt be pleased to know his work does indeed live on.

PETRARCH, LETTER TO POSTERITY

It is possible that some word of me may have come to you, though even this is doubtful, since an insignificant and obscure name will scarcely penetrate far in either time or space. If, however, you should have heard of me, you may desire to know what manner of man I was, or what was the outcome of my labors, especially those of which some description or, at any rate, the bare titles may have reached you.

To begin with myself, then, the utterances of men concerning me will differ widely, since in passing judgment almost every one is influenced not so much by truth as by preference, and good and evil report alike know no bounds. I was, in truth, a poor mortal like yourself, neither very exalted in my origin, nor, on the other hand, of the most humble birth, but belonging, as Augustus Caesar says of himself, to an ancient family. As to my disposition, I was not naturally perverse or wanting in modesty, however the contagion of evil associations may have corrupted me. My youth was gone before I realized it; I was carried away by the strength of manhood; but a ripper age brought me to my senses and taught me by experience the truth I had long before read in books, that youth and pleasure are vanity—nay, that the Author of all ages and times permits us miserable mortals, puffed up with emptiness, thus to wander about, until finally, coming to a tardy consciousness of our sins, we shall learn to know ourselves. In my prime I was blessed with a quick and active body, although not exceptionally strong; and while I do not lay claim to remarkable personal beauty, I was comely enough in my best days. I was possessed of a clear complexion, between light and dark, lively eyes, and for long years a keen vision, which however deserted me, contrary to my hopes, after I reached my sixtieth birthday, and forced me, to my great annoyance, to resort to glasses. Although I had previously enjoyed perfect health, old age brought with it the usual array of discomforts.

I have always possessed an extreme contempt for wealth; not that riches are not desirable in themselves, but because I hate the anxiety and care which are invariably associated with them. I certainly do not long to be able to give gorgeous banquets. I have, on the contrary, led a happier existence with plain living and ordinary fare than all the followers of Apicius,¹ with their elaborate dainties. So-called *convivia*, which are but vulgar bouts, sinning against sobriety and good manners, have always been repugnant to me. I have ever felt that it was irksome and profitless to invite others to such affairs, and not less so to be bidden to them myself. On the other hand, the pleasure of dining with one's friends is so great that nothing has ever given me more delight

Kenneth R. Bartlett, ed., *The Civilization of the Italian Renaissance*, Heath, 1992 (ISBN 0669-20900-7), original pp. 17–25 (Petrarch, "Letter to Posterity").

than their unexpected arrival, nor have I ever willingly sat down to table without a companion. Nothing displeases me more than display, for not only is it bad in itself, and opposed to humility, but it is troublesome and distracting.

I struggled in my younger days with a keen but constant and pure attachment, and would have struggled with it longer had not the sinking flame been extinguished by death—premature and bitter, but salutary.² I should be glad to be able to say that I had always been entirely free from irregular desires, but I should lie if I did so. I can, however, conscientiously claim that, although I may have been carried away by the fire of youth or by my ardent temperament, I have always abhorred such sins from the depths of my soul. As I approached the age of forty, while my powers were unimpaired and my passions were still strong, I not only abruptly threw off my bad habits, but even the very recollection of them, as if I had never looked upon a woman. This I mention as among the greatest of my blessings, and I render thanks to God, who freed me, while still sound and vigorous, from a disgusting slavery which had always been hateful to me.³ But let us turn to other matters.

I have perceived pride in others, never in myself, and however insignificant I may have been, I have always been still less important in my own judgment. My anger has very often injured myself, but never others. I make this boast without fear, since I am confident that I speak truly: While I am very prone to take offense, I am equally quick to forget injuries, and have a memory tenacious of benefits. I have always been most desirous of honorable friendships, and have faithfully cherished them. But it is the cruel fate of those who are growing old that they can commonly only weep for friends who have passed away. In my familiar associations with kings and princes, and in my friendship with noble personages, my good fortune has been such as to excite envy. I fled, however, from many of those to whom I was greatly attached; and such was my innate longing for liberty, that I studiously avoided those whose very name seemed incompatible with the freedom that I loved. The greatest kings of this age have loved and courted me. They may know why; I certainly do not. With some of them I was on such terms that they seemed in a certain sense my guests rather than I theirs; their lofty position in no way embarrassing me, but, on the contrary, bringing with it many advantages.

I possessed a well-balanced rather than a keen intellect, one prone to all kinds of good and wholesome study, but especially inclined to moral philosophy and the art of poetry. The latter, indeed, I neglected as time went on, and took delight in sacred literature. Finding in that a hidden sweetness which I had once esteemed but lightly, I came to regard the works of the poets as only amenities. Among the many subjects which interested me, I dwelt especially upon antiquity, for our own age has always repelled me, so that, had it not been for the love of those dear to me, I should have preferred to have been born in any other period than our own. In order to forget my own time, I have constantly striven to place myself in spirit in other ages, and consequently I delighted in history; not that the conflicting statements did not offend me, but when in doubt I accepted what appeared to me most probable, or yielded to the authority of the writer.

My style, as many claimed, was clear and forcible; but to me it seemed weak and obscure. In ordinary conversation with friends, or with those about me, I never gave thought to my language, and I have always wondered that Augustus Caesar should have taken such pains in this respect.⁴ When, however, the subject itself, or the place or listener, seemed to demand it, I gave some attention to style, with what success I cannot pretend to say; let them judge in whose presence I spoke. If only I have lived well, it matters little to me how I talked. Mere elegance of language can produce at best but an empty renown.

My parents were honorable folk, Florentine in their origin, of medium fortune, or, I may as well admit it, in a condition verging on poverty. They had been expelled from their native city,⁵

and consequently I was born in exile, at Arezzo, in the year 1304 of this latter age which begins with Christ's birth, July the twentieth, on a Monday, at dawn. My life up to the present has, either through fate or my own choice, fallen into the following divisions. A part only of my first year was spent at Arezzo, where I first saw the light. The six following years were, owing to the recall of my mother from exile, spent upon my father's estate at Incisa, about fourteen miles above Florence. I passed my eighth year at Pisa, the ninth and following years in Farther Gaul, at Avignon, on the left bank of the Rhone, where the Roman Pontiff holds and has long held the Church of Christ in shameful exile.⁶ It seemed a few years ago as if Urban V was on the point of restoring the Church to its ancient seat, but it is clear that nothing is coming of this effort, and, what is to me the worst of all, the Pope seems to have repented him of his good work, for failure came while he was still living.⁷ Had he lived but a little longer, he would certainly have learned how I regarded his retreat. My pen was in my hand when he abruptly surrendered at once his exalted office and his life. Unhappy man, who might have died before the altar of Saint Peter and in his own habitation! Had his successors remained in their capital he would have been looked upon as the cause of this benign change, while, had they left Rome, his virtue would have been all the more conspicuous in contrast with their fault.⁸

But such laments are somewhat remote from my subject. On the windy banks of the river Rhone I spent my boyhood, guided by my parents, and then, guided by my own fancies, the whole of my youth. Yet there were long intervals spent elsewhere, for I first passed four years at the little town of Carpentras, somewhat to the east of Avignon: in these two places I learned as much of grammar, logic, and rhetoric as my age permitted, or rather, as much as it is customary to teach in school: you know how little that is, dear reader. I then set out for Montpellier to study law, and spent four years there, then three at Bologna. I heard the whole body of the civil law, and would, as many thought, have distinguished myself later, had I but continued my studies. I gave up the subject altogether, however, so soon as it was no longer necessary to consult the wishes of my parents.⁹ My reason was that, although the dignity of the law, which is doubtless very great, and especially the numerous references it contains to Roman antiquity, did not fail to delight me, I felt it to be habitually degraded by those who practice it. It went against me painfully to acquire an art which I would not practice dishonestly, and could hardly hope to exercise otherwise. Had I made the latter attempt, my scrupulousness would doubtless have been ascribed to simplicity.

So at the age of two and twenty I returned home. I call my place of exile home, Avignon, where I had been since childhood; for habit has almost the potency of nature itself. I had already begun to be known there, and my friendship was sought by prominent men; wherefore I cannot say. I confess this is now a source of surprise to me, although it seemed natural enough at an age when we are used to regard ourselves as worthy of the highest respect. I was courted first and foremost by that very distinguished and noble family, the Colonesi, who, at that period, adorned the Roman Curia with their presence. However it might be now, I was at that time certainly quite unworthy of the esteem in which I was held by them. I was especially honored by the incomparable Giacomo Colonna, then Bishop of Lombez,¹⁰ whose peer I know not whether I have ever seen or ever shall see, and was taken by him to Gascony; there I spent such a divine summer among the foot-hills of the Pyrenees, in happy intercourse with my master and the members of our company, that I can never recall the experience without a sigh of regret.¹¹

Returning thence, I passed many years in the house of Giacomo's brother, Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, not as if he were my lord and master, but rather my father, or better, a most affectionate brother—nay, it was as if I were in my own home.¹² About this time, a youthful desire impelled me to visit France and Germany. While I invented certain reasons to satisfy my

elders of the propriety of the journey, the real explanation was a great inclination and longing to see new sights. I first visited Paris, as I was anxious to discover what was true and what fabulous in the accounts I had heard of that city. On my return from this journey I went to Rome, which I had since my infancy ardently desired to visit. There I soon came to venerate Stephano, the noble head of the family of the Colonnese, like some ancient hero, and was in turn treated by him in every respect like a son. The love and good-will of this excellent man toward me remained constant to the end of his life, and lives in me still, nor will it cease until I myself pass away.

On my return, since I experienced a deep-seated and innate repugnance to town life, especially in that disgusting city of Avignon, which I heartily abhorred, I sought some means of escape. I fortunately discovered, about fifteen miles from Avignon, a delightful valley, narrow and secluded, called Vaucluse, where the Sorgue, the prince of streams, takes its rise. Captivated by the charms of the place, I transferred thither myself and my books. Were I to describe what I did there during many years, it would prove a long story. Indeed, almost every bit of writing which I have put forth was either accomplished or begun, or at least conceived, there, and my undertakings have been so numerous that they still continue to vex and weary me. My mind, like my body, is characterized by a certain versatility and readiness, rather than by strength, so that many tasks that were easy of conception have been given up by reason of the difficulty of their execution. The character of my surroundings suggested the composition of a sylvan or bucolic song.¹³ I also dedicated a work in two books upon *The Life of Solitude*, to Philip, now exalted to the Cardinal-bishopric of Sabina. Although always a great man, he was, at the time of which I speak, only the humble Bishop of Cavaillon.¹⁴ He is the only one of my old friends who is still left to me, and he has always loved and treated me not as a bishop (as Ambrose did Augustine), but as a brother.

While I was wandering in those mountains upon Friday in Holy Week, the strong desire seized me to write an epic in an heroic strain, taking as my theme Scipio Africanus the Great, who had, strange to say, been dear to me from my childhood. But although I began the execution of this project with enthusiasm, I straightway abandoned it, owing to a variety of distractions. The poem was, however, christened *Africa*, from the name of its hero, and, whether from his fortunes or mine, it did not fail to arouse the interest of many before they had seen it.¹⁵

While leading a leisurely existence in this region, I received, remarkable as it may seem, upon one and the same day,¹⁶ letters both from the Senate at Rome and the Chancellor of the University of Paris, pressing me to appear in Rome and Paris, respectively, to receive the poet's crown of laurel.¹⁷ In my youthful elation I convinced myself that I was quite worthy of this honor; the recognition came from eminent judges, and I accepted their verdict rather than that of my own better judgment. I hesitated for a time which I should give ear to, and sent a letter to Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, of whom I have already spoken, asking his opinion. He was so near that, although I wrote late in the day, I received his reply before the third hour on the morrow. I followed his advice, and recognized the claims of Rome as superior to all others. My acceptance of his counsel is shown by my twofold letter to him on that occasion, which I still keep. I set off accordingly; but although, after the fashion of youth, I was a most indulgent judge of my own work, I still blushed to accept in my own case the verdict even of such men as those who summoned me, despite the fact that they would certainly not have honored me in this way, had they not believed me worthy.

Notes

1. Proverbial gourmet from the age of Tiberius.
SOURCE: Excerpts from D. Thompson (ed. and trans.), *Petrarch: A Humanist Among Princes*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 1–13. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.
2. While it is tempting to see here a reference to Laura, there are chronological difficulties. The period of life described (*adolescentia*) extended from age 15 to 28, but Petrarch's attachment to Laura lasted until her death many years later. Perhaps we must simply accept this as one of those not infrequent instances where Petrarch has altered the account of his life.
3. Though a cleric, Petrarch was the father of two illegitimate children: Giovanni, born in 1337; and Francesca, born six years later.
4. Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, p. 87.
5. Petrarch's father, a "White" Guelph, was banished by the victorious "Black" Guelphs on October 20, 1302 (nine months after the expulsion of Dante, whom he had known).
6. The French pope, Clement V (1305–14), had moved the papal court to Avignon in 1309.
7. Urban V (1362–70) left Avignon in April, 1367; returned there from Rome in September, 1370; and died on December 19 of the same year.
8. Petrarch had sent metrical epistles to Urban's predecessors, Benedict XII (1334–42) and Clement VI (1342–52), urging them to restore the papacy to Rome.
9. Petrarch left Bologna in April 1326, probably on receiving news of his father's death. His mother had died some years earlier.
10. Some thirty miles southwest of Toulouse. Giacomo had been elected bishop in 1328. He died in 1341.
11. It was during this summer of 1330 that Petrarch formed his lifelong friendship with "Socrates" (the Flemish Ludwig van Kempen, chanter in the chapel of Cardinal Giovanni Colonna), who resided at Avignon; and with "Laelius" (a Roman, Lello di Pietro Stefano dei Tosetti), who also resided at Avignon until the cardinal's death in 1348. Many of Petrarch's letters are addressed to these two friends.
12. As a household chaplain Petrarch was an active member of the cardinal's staff from 1330 to 1337, and an occasionally active member for another ten years. This was his first ecclesiastical appointment. On his ecclesiastical career, see E. H. Wilkins, *Studies in the Life and Works of Petrarch* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 3–32.
13. Petrarch conflates his first stay in Vaucluse (1337–41) with his third (1345–47); for the *Bucolicum Carman* and the *De Vita Solitaria* were both begun during the latter period. Petrarch began one or more major works during each of his four periods of residence at Vaucluse.
14. Philippe de Cabassoles, whose diocese included Vaucluse, was about Petrarch's age, and they shared similar tastes for books and country life. Philippe became cardinal in 1368, cardinal-bishop in 1370, and died in 1372.
15. Begun in 1338 or 1339, the *Africa* was never finished; and aside from a fragment that circulated during Petrarch's lifetime, it was not published until after his death. It proved something of a disappointment to Coluccio Salutati and others after they had seen it.
16. September 1, 1340.
17. Albertino Mussato had been crowned with laurel in Padua in 1315; and Dante had been offered a crown by Bologna but had declined (see *Paradiso* XXV, 1–9 on his desire to receive the crown in Florence). For the whole complicated question see E. H. Wilkins, "The Coronation of Petrarch" (*The Making of the "Canzoniere" and Other Petrarchan Studies* [Rome, 1951], pp. 9–69), who concludes: "the sum of the matter would seem to be that Petrarch succeeded, after persistent and varied efforts, in getting two invitations to receive the laurel crown; that the specific basis for the invitations was a rather limited amount of published Latin verse, together with the knowledge that he was engaged in the writing of a grandiose epic; that he had convinced the Colonna family and Roberto de' Bardi [Chancellor at the University of Paris, and a Florentine] that he was in truth a great poet; that their sense of his poetic worth was presumably enhanced by their knowledge that he was engaged in the writing of historical works and by the obvious range of his classical scholarship; and—just possibly—that the beauty of some of his belittled Italian lyrics was in their minds" (p. 35).

Reading 18

ORATION ON THE DIGNITY OF MAN

Pico della Mirandola

In the opening section of the *Oration*, Pico declares that unlike other creatures, human beings have not been assigned a fixed place in the universe. Our destiny is not determined by anything outside us. Rather, God has bestowed upon us a unique distinction: the liberty to determine the form and value our lives shall acquire. The notion that people have the power to shape their own lives is a key element in the emergence of the modern outlook.

I have read in the records of the Arabians, reverend Fathers, that Abdala the Saracen,¹ when questioned as to what on this stage of the world, as it were, could be seen most worthy of wonder, replied: “There is nothing to be seen more wonderful than man.” In agreement with this opinion is the saying of Hermes Trismegistus: “A great miracle, Asclepius, is man.”² But when I weighed the reason for these maxims, the many grounds for the excellence of human nature reported by many men failed to satisfy me—that man is the intermediary between creatures, the intimate of the gods, the kings of the lower beings, by the acuteness of his senses, by the discernment of his reason, and by the light of his intelligence the interpreter of nature, the interval between fixed eternity and fleeting time, and (as the Persians say) the bond, nay, rather, the marriage song of the world, on David’s [biblical king] testimony but little lower than the angels. Admittedly great though these reasons be, they are not the principal grounds, that is, those which may rightfully claim for themselves the privilege of the highest admiration. For why should we not admire more the angels themselves and the blessed choirs of heaven? At last it seems to me I have come to understand why man is the most fortunate of creatures and consequently worthy of all admiration and what precisely is that rank which is his lot in the universal chain of Being—a rank to be envied not only by brutes but even by the stars and by minds beyond this world. It is a matter past faith and a wondrous one. Why should it not be? For it is on this very account that man is rightly called and judged a great miracle and a wonderful creature indeed. . . .

. . . God the Father, the supreme Architect, had already built this cosmic home we behold, the most sacred temple of His godhead, by the laws of His mysterious wisdom. The region above the heavens He had adorned with Intelligences, the heavenly spheres He had quickened with eternal souls, and the excrementary and filthy parts of the lower world He had filled with a multitude of animals of every kind. But, when the work was finished, the Craftsman kept wishing

Perry, Peden, Von Laue, eds., *Sources of the Western Tradition*, Volume 1, Houghton Mifflin (ISBN: 0-395-89201-5), original pp. 286–7 (Pico della Mirandola, “Oration on the Dignity of Man”).

that there was someone to ponder the plan of so great a work, to love its beauty, and to wonder at its vastness. Therefore, when everything was done (as Moses and Timaeus³ bear witness), He finally took thought concerning the creation of man. But there was not among His archetypes that from which He could fashion a new offspring, nor was there in His treasurehouses anything which He might bestow on His new son as an inheritance, nor was there in the seats of all the world a place where the latter might sit to contemplate the universe. All was now complete; all things had been assigned to the highest, the middle, and the lowest orders. But in its final creation it was not the part of the Father's power to fail as though exhausted. It was not the part of His wisdom to waver in a needful matter through poverty of counsel. It was not the part of His kindly love that he who was to praise God's divine generosity in regard to others should be compelled to condemn it in regard to himself.

At last the best of artisans [God] ordained that that creature to whom He had been able to give nothing proper to himself should have joint possession of whatever had been peculiar to each of the different kinds of being. He therefore took man as a creature of indeterminate nature and, assigning him a place in the middle of the world, addressed him thus: "Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy longing and according to thy judgment thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire. The nature of all other beings is limited and constrained within the bounds of laws prescribed by Us. Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature. We have set thee at the world's center that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world. We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine."

O supreme generosity of God the Father, O highest and most marvelous felicity of man! To him it is granted to have whatever he chooses, to be whatever he wills. Beasts as soon as they are born (so says Lucilius)⁴ bring with them from their mother's womb all they will ever possess. Spiritual beings [angels], either from the beginning or soon thereafter, become what they are to be for ever and ever. On man when he came into life the Father conferred the seeds of all kinds and the germs of every way of life. Whatever seeds each man cultivates will grow to maturity and bear in him their own fruit. If they be vegetative, he will be like a plant. If sensitive, he will become brutish. If rational, he will grow into a heavenly being. If intellectual, he will be an angel and the son of God. And if, happy in the lot of no created thing, he withdraws into the center of his own unity, his spirit, made one with God, in the solitary darkness of God, who is set above all things, shall surpass them all.

Notes

1. Abdala the Saracen possibly refers to the eighth-century A.D. writer Abd-Allah Ibn al-Muqaffa.
2. Ancient writings dealing with magic, alchemy, astrology, and occult philosophy were erroneously attributed to an assumed Egyptian priest, Hermes Trismegistus. Asclepius was a Greek god of healing.
3. Timaeus, a Greek Pythagorean philosopher, was a central character in Plato's famous dialogue *Timaeus*.
4. Lucilius, a first-century A.D. Roman poet and Stoic philosopher, was a close friend of Seneca, the philosopher-dramatist.



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